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ENCOUNTERS
WITH
WILD BEASTS



GILLMORE

1



EVEN BETTING.

ENCOUNTERS
WITH
WILD BEASTS

BY
PARKER GILLMORE

AUTHOR OF
"A RIDE THROUGH HOSTILE AFRICA," "THE GREAT THIRST LAND," ETC. ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY
ALFRED T. ELWES



LONDON
WM. H. ALLEN & CO., 13, WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

PUBLISHERS TO THE INDIA OFFICE

1881

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LONDON: PRINTED BY
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO., CHANDOS STREET
AND PAUL'S WORK, EDINBURGH

P R E F A C E.

THE adventures with wild animals narrated in this work are, with a few exceptions, my own experiences, those that are not are from the pen of two of the most celebrated sportsmen in India.

Of one thing the reader may feel assured, viz., that he is perusing facts, not fiction ; the latter a type of literature that has of late become fearfully abundant, as it invariably is overflowing with erroneous Natural History.

PARKER GILLMORE.

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ENCOUNTERS WITH WILD BEASTS.

ELEPHANTS.

ON the margin of the Limpopo, as lovely a stream as any in our dear own "home land," and famous from the exploits of the mighty "Nimrod," Gordon Cumming, the following incident occurred to me:—

"Bass, Bass, a Boer man wants you," energetically called Umganey (my Zulu attendant).

Day was but commencing to break, and I was still asleep when thus disturbed. I hurriedly pulled on my pantaloons and boots, and came forth. With the assistance of the driver, I was able to make out the cause of the early visit. A drove of elephants had passed during the night, and the Boers wished me to accompany them in the hunt.

I thanked my visitor for his courtesy, but explained that I had no horse. This had been anticipated, however, and a mount was at my service. Hurriedly swallowing my coffee, filling my pockets with cartridges and *Belton*, buckling on

a sharp pair of spurs, and shouldering one of my eight-bore double barrels, I went over to where the cavalcade were already mustering.

My horse was pointed out ; it was already saddled, and in charge of a Kafir, and truly was as wretched an antediluvian animal—all scored and cut, in fact, there did not appear to be a sound piece of hide on any portion of its body—as ever has been seen, or ever will be. The thorns might have done much towards this disfigurement, the jambock more ; but there were several parallel scars across the rump that strongly whispered that master lion, at some period or other, had made a strong effort to *jump* this horse. My hosts evidently saw disappointment in my countenance, for they at once commenced to enumerate its wonderful qualities, and while they enlarged on them, I thought if it had new fore legs, new hind ones, and a new barrel, it might not be quite so bad. It was one of the “has beens,” and an admirable specimen of that race ; still it was a horse, and without a horse I must defer at present having a shot at the elephants. I got upon its back, it fairly cringed under my weight. I dismounted and removed the saddle, and, oh, what a sore it had along the vertebræ ! I thought I would decline going, but then there were elephants to be shot, so I sent for one of my own saddles and a *numnah*, tightened up the girths, and remounted.

Poor wretch! it did not give beneath me so much as before, but I will acknowledge it did yield a little. One thing I did not like, in fact very much disliked, was, that I should not be able to lead the hunt, and show off before the young Boers, in fact, teach them that an Englishman was quite their equal in handling horse and gun. But, dear me, what evil star shone on me, that I should be compelled to figure on such a Rosinante? I was almost making up my mind to buy a bay horse, for which a hundred and thirty pounds had been asked by the owner, when further anguish on the subject was stopped by our reaching the trail. A couple of Kaffirs led the way, so as to prevent the spoor being lost; but this was almost unnecessary, so distinct was the path the mighty beasts had made through the forest.

It was evident from this, and their not having deviated to the right or left to feed, that they were in a hurry, and probably travelling from one haunt to another. Such a chase is generally a long one, not unfrequently an unsuccessful one; but Fortune chose to smile favourably on us; for, after about three hours' ride, the Kaffirs declared the game in sight.

Not a word had been spoken for some time; now ensued a hurried consultation; when the programme decided upon was for all to approach

as cautiously as possible, till the elephants took the alarm, when we were to charge, each hunter selecting his prey.

For three hundred yards or more we silently stole through the forest in single file; at length the leading horseman halted, and we wheeled into line. Over the underbush towered the backs of a number of dark animals. Closer and closer to them we approached, when one of the elephants uttered a shrill note, and in an instant the herd was crashing through the timber, raising a tremendous dust, and sending rotten limbs of brushwood flying far and wide.

The poor old horse, who had to this moment been a regular slug, took the bit in his teeth, and tore along in pursuit as well as the best of them. He needed no guiding, I only sat still and let him go. If the others were after the elephants, so was he; and if his fore legs only kept him up, there was very little doubt that soon I would be afforded an occasion to use my gun.

A big tusker, of course, I wanted, but such I could not see; so, to rectify the deficiency, singled out the largest animal in the herd, and made a dash to get alongside of it. In this I was successful, for the old nag knew his work like a book, and required no forcing. Holding the gun at arm's length I fired. The heavy charge nearly sprung it out of my hands; but the elephant

staggered, recovered itself, staggered again, and then came to a dead stop.

With the report of the gun the veteran charger had sheered off to the left, expecting pursuit, and not getting it he easily pulled up, so I turned him round again so as to renew the contest.

The poor stricken beast was evidently very sick—blood flowed from its mouth and trunk. It seemed desirous of charging, but was without the power to do so; so I jumped off my horse, went within fifteen yards, and fired at the space between the ear and eye. With a crash the poor thing fell, struggled violently to regain its feet, rolled over upon its side, and yielded up life. It was a cow in the prime of life, but its tusks did not exceed eight or nine pounds in weight.

I now became cognisant that a heavy fusilade was going on to my left; I, in consequence, rode in that direction, when I overtook a Boer having quite a lively time with a wounded one—she charged so persistently and fiercely that he was as often the pursued as pursuer; so I left my horse, watched my chance, and, while she was turning round to keep her front to her first antagonist, put two bullets in her side, a foot or so behind the shoulder-blade. Attempting to charge, she fell upon her head, burying both tusks in the ground, and died, game to the last, with her front to the enemy. The action was short,

sharp, and decisive, I may say brilliant, the only drawback being that both were cows.

I admit that shooting cow-elephants requires some apology—in my ardour I did not think of sex, and was not aware that the animal I had killed was a female till after its death ; in delivering the *coup-de-chasse* to the last, it was so severely wounded before I came up that it could not have survived. It certainly was an unlucky entry into elephant-hunting in Africa to commence by killing cows.

Now the chase was over the old horse was as great a slug as before, and it required no ordinary amount of care and attention to keep him on his limbs. However, he took me home in safety, and I parted with him with only one regret, and that was that he was not at least twenty years younger.

Next morning we had baked elephant's foot ; it was one mass of gelatine, excellently flavoured, and, I am certain, very sustaining.

I had done so well in the hunt, in fact distinguished myself, that I was regarded by all with eyes of great approval ; the old chief man did not hesitate to tell me so, and was so patronizing that I commenced to fear that he might entertain matrimonial schemes for me towards his grand-daughter, a little maid who brought me twice a day an ample supply of clotted milk—an

admirable dish when you get accustomed to it—but from her simplicity of manner it was evident she knew nothing of the matter.

During the stay of these Boers in this locality they killed eleven elephants, fourteen lions, besides giraffes, and innumerable antelopes.

Three hundred miles to the North of where the last incidents occurred, the following took place, on a hunting velt of Kama's, King of Bamanwatto.

I was sitting at breakfast, and a very good one it was, for I had curried stein-bok and some admirable Mashoona rice—the finest rice I have ever eaten—so as we had plenty of meat in the camp, I had resolved to take a holiday. Ruby, my pet mare, had eaten her mealies, and the dogs had had their grub, and everything looked as if there were no probability of the ordinary routine of life being disturbed, when that fellow, Umganey, whom I like so much, came rushing up with the news that there were elephants close by.

“Where, and how did you find out this?” I inquired.

“From a Massara—he see them this morning,” was the answer.

So there was nothing for it but to have Ruby driven up and saddled, and go in pursuit, thus giving up my intended day of rest for one of more than ordinary toil.

I had determined to have a holiday, and thus give the mare a holiday too, but how ruthlessly was it destroyed! I can safely assert that I wished that the elephants had been at Jericho instead of feeding in proximity to the camp.

But ivory was money, and money was wanted, obtaining possession of which is a disease with which many besides myself are frequently seized; so I laid aside my pipe, pulled myself together, and assumed a look so like business, that if an observer had gazed upon me he would have thought that to slay elephants was the sole ambition of my life, and that to know they were within access, the delight of my heart would be to jump into the saddle and rush off *instantly*. Ay, ay! we are all deceitful creatures. How many go to church because they think it looks respectable?

The little mare was willing; she came up to the waggon at a high, jaunty trot, stuck her nose into my buckets and pans to find where the mealies had been deposited—for it was ever my habit to indulge her when she was brought to me—and not finding what she wanted, looked in my face so pleadingly that I felt ashamed of my forgetfulness—in fact, as if I had told a premeditated lie, and been detected in doing so.

But to remedy my forgetfulness was easy, so I put a handful or two on the top of the fackey

while I proceeded to tighten the girths. Never did the little pet appear so fit to go ; she was as buoyant as a cork in body and spirit, so when I threw my leg over her, I felt that she was able to accomplish aught that was in the power of horse-flesh. Let me impart a secret—possibly I may be laughed at for calling it so—never tease a horse by tickling or otherwise, for, although at first it may resent it with apparent friendliness, in the end it will with vice. If they come to you for grain at an hour they are in the habit of receiving it, do not disappoint them. Of course there are old stagers of garrons, who have been spoilt by their previous owners, and whom all the coaxing in the world will not recall to virtuous courses, but with a young one it is different ; treat it kindly and consistently, and it will reciprocate in the same manner.

The spoor was soon found, and we followed it briskly. There was no doubt the elephants were not far ahead, and momentarily I expected to be in sight of them, when five buffaloes, who seemed to drop from the heavens, for they had not been seen before, charged right into our party. Ruby sprung forward, jumped over an intervening bush, and thus in a moment placed me in safety ; but, when I turned round to look at my attendants, one was finishing a somersault in the air, another hanging by his hands from a limb, his feet not a

foot above a buffalo's head, who was madly, but ineffectually, charging backwards and forwards at them. The poor fellow had not strength to pull himself up, but simply to hold on, and, of course, in time must have succumbed and dropped in front of his foe, but I made a good shot off the mare's back, and placed a two-ounce bullet exactly in the proper place behind the shoulder. Slowly, and uttering a piteous complaint for being deprived of life, it sunk down and died directly under the limbs of the clinging savage.

Blow the buffaloes ! They are the most dangerous beasts on the whole velt, for they are as cunning as a pet fox, as stealthy as a cat, almost as swift as a horse, and possess power to lift a house, or, at any rate, a shanty. Again, they never know when they are beaten—frequently you may riddle them with bullets, and they seem still to have a charge in them, and if a final shot takes away that power, they will sink down and groan out a remonstrance at the treatment they have received.

However, I soon got my scattered forces assembled, for none had received very serious injury, and *en avant* was the cry. In three miles we overtook the herd. One of them was a splendid tusker, and through proper management and care I succeeded in giving him the stern shot. His travelling days I saw were then over.

So I singled out another, and tried to treat him in the same cavalier manner, but he was the most pugnacious, wide-awake brute I ever came across. First, when I was about to pull the trigger, he turned almost completely round, and charged so persistently, that if the little mare had not known what she was about, and been on her guard, we must have come to grief, for the long-reaching stride of elephants takes them far more rapidly over the ground than any one unacquainted with them would believe. Again and again I went within thirty yards to fire, but the brute would not give me a chance to pick out a vital place, for the head was always towards me, and the instant I halted to shoot was the signal for a charge.

The mare was as cool and self-possessed as ever she was in her life. The moment I dropped the reins on her withers she stood, and without guidance, as soon as the shot was fired, avoided the irate animal's attack.

I thought this a good opportunity for trying the head shot I had practised in the East, although the distance was long. Crack went my right barrel over Ruby's ears. The ball hit just above the junction of the trunk with the forehead. Down came the game, but only to his knees, and in an instant after was on his pins, and as active and pugnacious as ever.

Reloading my discharged barrel, I tried if the

left would be more successful, but not a bit of it. The quarry got it almost in the centre of the forehead, the result of which was not at all satisfactory, for it provoked the most sustained charge that I had yet experienced.

Coming to the conclusion that I was fooling away my time and ammunition, and putting the plucky beast to unnecessary pain, I selected the knee, for I could not prevent the animal facing me, and at the first fire brought it down, finishing the business by placing a second bullet between the root of the ear and the eye.

William, my Bechuana guide, also killed a very large tusker ; in fact, the best that fell that day. By three I was back in camp, and the people sent off to bring in the ivory and meat.

Into the tsetse-fly country I now went ; game I found in the utmost abundance, particularly buffalo.

If I had desired it I could have killed a dozen of them a day ; but tuskers were what I wanted, and they were not scarce, but difficult to circumvent.

However, we persevered, and ivory came in plentifully. One incident which occurred in the weeks I spent away from my waggon is, I think, deserving of notice. For two days we followed on foot the spoor of several elephants ; of course we slept out at night on the track, and under the cir-

cumstances tried to make ourselves as comfortable as we could. The third day we overtook our game in some hills, not steep, but very rocky ; our approach to them was unobserved, so that I got within thirty yards of a large tusker before I fired. The first barrel staggered him, the second missed fire, and before I could shove fresh cartridges into the breeches, my position was discovered, and I had to seek safety in flight, while trying as hard as I could to reload the gun. An elephant does not appear to be going fast when in pursuit of his foe, but trust not your eyes, or you will have reason to repent it.

Thus I was hunted from pillar to post, and kept moving all the time ; ultimately the amusement became so exciting that I would willingly have dispensed with the attention of my pursuer, but I could not do so, for now I was a perfectly used-up man from fever. Finally he nearly was on the top of me, so I turned and ran down the *copje* side, the monster just behind me ; the ground was steep, so I suddenly, just as I thought the trunk was over my shoulder, turned to the left, and the big beast over-shot me, and went on for fifty yards trying to stop his impetus ; turning suddenly round I gave him a two-ounce bullet in the rump. He never chased a Christian afterwards.

I will here add a slight description of the inconveniences that wanderers in distant and un-

known parts of the earth have to endure when alone in the lands of the uncivilized and wandering tribes which have not been thrown in contact with Christianity.

It would be impossible to conceive three more miserable days than those which I experienced in my southern course homewards.

The depression of their rider seemed to affect the horses ; for know, dear reader, that there is a great amount of animal magnetism between the horseman and the animal he bestrides ; nor is this to be wondered at in the present instance, for their food had been of the scantiest. A tired nag makes a tired man, but when both are sick at heart and weary from fatigue and want of food, it is no easy matter to get over the ground. If I could have travelled by night I do not think I should have felt the journey so irksome ; but being forced to select day, the power of the sun was so great that the top of my head seemed as though it were covered with coals of fire.

Scarcely ever have I seen game in such abundance as in this part of the country, spoor of every description being discernible in all directions ; amongst which I distinguished the immense circular impression made by the elephant, the slipper-like foot-track of the giraffe, and the deep indentation of the cloven hoof of the eland, and, more noticeable still, of the water-bok. Nor was

feathered game wanting, for frequently, on rapid wings, the bush-koran would flash almost under my chargers' hoofs, often causing both them and me to start, from the suddenness with which they would break into view, and the loud whirr made by their strong pinions. "Pauw" were also numerous; of this, noblest among winged game, I have distinctly recognized two species in South Africa, but neither is identical with the bustard of Europe and North Africa, although currently supposed so to be.

In the afternoon, when a trifling halt had been made, having heard a rustling in the bush and the apparent sound of breaking of branches—being aware of the description of animal I might expect from these indications, I turned my sight in that direction, and was rewarded with a view of over a dozen male elephants, several of which had splendid tusks. How many were in the drove is quite impossible for me to say, for when feeding, which they were then doing, they scatter out widely through the woodlands.

Near sundown, when I had selected my camping-ground for the night, some giraffe came down and had a quiet stare at me, for they twisted their long necks from side to side the better to obtain a view of my proceedings, whilst their large, luminous, and intelligent eyes appeared to express the thoughts that extreme wonderment was float-

ing through their minds. To destroy so much meat, for I could only take a few pounds away, I was very loth; and shortly after I received a reward for sparing the giants, for a little steinbok, an animal not larger than the roe-deer of Scotland, peered through a mapani bush.

I discovered his presence by the horses turning round and looking anxiously in the direction of the creature. My hands trembled so that to fire anything but a resting shot would have been a miss. However, fortunately I did not, and soon had some venison, the sweetest flesh of all the South African antelope, boiling on the fire.

Before leaving the African elephant and passing to its Indian *confrère*, I would say that the former is quite two feet higher than the latter, and that both male and female possess tusks. In some parts of the East Indies, Ceylon notably, it being rare to find even a male carrying ivory.

Before bidding adieu to this most interesting and useful of beasts, I would fain extract a description of the chase and death of a large male elephant, as given in the interesting and graphic work of George P. Sanderson, Esq., officer in charge of the Government Elephant-catching Establishment in Mysore:—

“Having made all the inquiries I desired, I commenced my return march to the plains of Bengal. This was in October, 1875. During

the first day's march I passed two large herds of elephants ; one probably contained eighty individuals. Next morning I was walking in advance of the baggage-elephants when we heard elephants feeding in a valley to our right. The jungle was tolerably feasible here, so I determined to have a look at them, to form an idea of their general stamp, and what fodder they were most intent upon, and other particulars.

“ My gun-bearer, Jaffer, who had accompanied me to Bengal from Mysore, and an experienced mahout to examine the elephants, accompanied me, with a heavy rifle in case of accidents. The herd consisted of about fifty individuals, and after examining them for about an hour at close quarters, merely keeping the wind, we turned to rejoin the pad-elephant on the path.

“ Just then a shrill trumpeting and crashing of bamboos, about two hundred yards to our left, broke the stillness, and from the noise we knew it was a tusker-fight. We ran towards the place where the sounds of combat were increasing every moment ; a deep ravine at last only separated us from the combatants, and we could see the tops of the bamboos bowing as the monsters bore each other backwards and forwards with a crashing noise in their tremendous struggles. As we ran along the bank of the nullah to find a crossing, one elephant uttered a deep roar of pain, and

crossed the nullah, some forty yards in advance of us, to our side. Here he commenced to destroy a bamboo-clump (the bamboos in these hills have a very large hollow, and are weak and comparatively worthless) in sheer fury, grumbling deeply the while with rage and pain. Blood was streaming from a deep stab in his left side, high up. He was a very large elephant, with long and fairly thick tusks, and with much white about the forehead ; the left tusk was some inches shorter than the right.

“The opponent of this Goliath must have been a monster, indeed, to have worsted him. An elephant-fight, if the combatants are well matched, frequently lasts for a day or more, a round being fought every now and then. The beaten elephant retreats temporarily, followed leisurely by the other, until by mutual consent they meet again. The more powerful elephant occasionally keeps his foe in view till he perhaps kills him ; otherwise, the beaten elephant betakes himself off for good on finding he has the worst of it. Tails are frequently bitten off in these encounters. This mutilation is common amongst rogue-elephants, and amongst the females in a herd ; in the latter case it is generally the result of rivalry amongst themselves.

“The wounded tusker was evidently the temporarily-beaten combatant of the occasion, and

I have seldom seen such a picture of power and rage as he presented, mowing the bamboos down with trunk and tusks, and bearing the thickest part over with his fore-feet. Suddenly his whole demeanour changed. He backed from the clump and stood like a statue. Not a sound broke the sudden stillness for an instant. His antagonist was silent, wherever he was. Now the tip of his trunk came slowly round in our direction; and I saw that we were discovered to his fine sense of smell. We had been standing silently behind a thin bamboo-clump, watching him, and when I first saw that he had winded us, I imagined he might take himself off. But his frenzy quite overcame all fear for the moment; forward went his ears and up went his tail, in a way which no one who has once seen the signal in a wild elephant can mistake the significance of, and in the same instant he wheeled round with astonishing quickness, getting at once into full speed, and bore straight down upon us. The bamboos by which we were partly hidden were useless as cover, and would have prevented a clear shot, so I stepped out into open ground the instant the elephant commenced his charge. I gave a shout in the hope of stopping him, which failed. I had my No. 4 double smooth-bore loaded with 10 drachms in hand.

“I fired when the elephant was about nine

paces distant, aiming into his curled trunk about one foot below the fatal bump between the eyes, as his head was held very high, and this allowance had to be made for its elevation. I felt confident of the shot, but made a grand mistake in not giving him both barrels ; it was useless to reserve the left as I did at such close quarters, and I deserved more than what followed for doing so. The smoke from the 10 drachms obscured the elephant, and I stooped quickly to see where he lay. Good heavens ! he had not been even checked, and was upon me ! There was no time to step right or left. His tusks came through the smoke (his head being now held low) like the cow-catchers of a locomotive, and I had just time to fall flat to avoid being hurled along in front of him. I fell a little to the right ; the next instant down came his ponderous fore-foot within a few inches of my left thigh, and I should have been trodden on had I not been quick enough, when I saw the fore-foot coming, to draw my leg from the sprawling position in which I fell. As the elephant rushed over me he shrieked shrilly, which showed his trunk was uncoiled ; and his head also being held low, instead of in charging position, I inferred rightly that he was in full flight. Had he stopped I should have been caught, but the heavy bullet had taken all the fighting out of him. Jaffer had been disposed of by a recoiling bamboo, and was

now lying almost in the elephant's line; fortunately, however, the brute held on. I was covered with blood from the wound inflicted by his late antagonist in his left side; even my hair was matted together when the blood became dry. The mahout had jumped into the deep and precipitous nullah to our left at the commencement of hostilities.

"How it was that I did not bag the elephant I cannot tell. Probably I went a trifle high, but even then the shock should have stopped him. He was, I believe, unable to pull up, being on a gentle incline and at full speed, though doubtless all hostile intentions were knocked out of him by the severe visitation upon his knowledge-box. Had I done anything but what I did at the critical moment, there is no doubt I should have been caught. I felt as collected through it all as possible. The deadly coolness which sportsmen often experience is in proportion in its intensity to the increase of danger and necessity for nerve.

"Jaffer and I picked ourselves up and pursued the retreating tusker. He was now going slowly and wearily, and we were up with him in two hundred yards from the scene of our discomfiture, but in such thick cover that it would have been folly to have closed with him there; so, as we had the wind, we kept about thirty yards behind

him. Unfortunately the bamboo cover was extensive, and in about a quarter of a mile he joined the herd without once emerging into the open, as we had hoped he would, and afford us another chance. The herd had only gone about two hundred yards at the shot, and were feeding again, and as I feared that following the tusker would only bring us into collision with other elephants, we abandoned the chase and returned to the pad-elephant. Had I only had my Mysore Shōlago or Kurraba trackers with me, we should no doubt have recovered the elephant."

Again returning to Africa, I would speak of an elephant that every hunter north of Bamanwatto seemed to have seen, yet none were able to accomplish his death. This animal's tusks were represented to weigh not less than one hundred pounds each, and although in height inferior to many that had been killed in the neighbouring districts, still he was so stoutly built there could be no doubt but that in weight he surpassed all that had been slaughtered for many years. This formidable animal I had a great desire to come across for three reasons: the first, accomplishing his destruction, would bring me no end of kudos; secondly, the brute had become mischievous, and was reported to have killed several offending natives; and, thirdly, the price of ivory in 1876 would have made the two tusks worth upwards

of £100 without even taking them as far as the Transvaal for sale.

Elephants wander so much that I scarcely hoped for success, yet at times a thought would glance through my mind that it was just possible that it might be my luck to secure this prize.

In speaking of the wandering proclivities of these enormous beasts, the reason is not, I think, that they desire change of scene, but that they consume so much food that one locality cannot long support a herd. This reason is more applicable to Africa than to Asia, for, as a rule, in the former continent you do not find, except on the margins of rivers, such dense and almost impenetrable jungles of vegetation.

Soon after sundown we trecked, hoping to reach a branch of the Juba river early the next day. Our reason for travelling at night was that we had lately had a very scant supply of water; moreover, there is no time when the oxen slip so expeditiously along, for it is invariably cool, and those pests of the country, flies, are not troublesome.

Two Griquas, who had been in the employment of a trader in the Lake District, and who had quarrelled with their former master, had lately joined me. They appeared decent enough fellows, and unquestionably gave evidence of being first-class sportsmen. Towards break of day we found

ourselves near the stream, to the water of which there was a steep descent. From being so long in the yoke, the poor bullocks were far from fresh, and dragged their load at the slowest pace that could be deemed motion. Not even the smell of the invigorating liquid, which doubtlessly all much craved, could imbue them with increased energy; even the formidable whip had lost its powers of intimidation. But a sudden change came over the spirit of the scene. Without perceptible cause, every ox rushed forward, the driver was too late to reach the break, and the lumbering waggon commenced its downward course with the velocity of a steam-engine. All thought a lion had scared the fatigued beasts, and kept a sharp look-out for the night prowler. But while thus engaged, suddenly the enormous conveyance seemed about to upset, a crack like a pistol-shot was echoed from the adjoining trees, and, hang it!—excuse the strong expression—the dissel-boom and treck-toe had both smashed, and the team, in a mixed-up mass, were struggling to gallop off to the eastward, much to the danger of their legs. Never was such a jumble, for the cattle still were in their yokes, the fleeter animals gaining the front and drawing their slower comrades along, many of whom were on their backs.

But to return to the waggon. Without the steering-power of the dissel-boom, it was simply

controlled by its own gravity, so continued down the grade, the velocity of its descent increasing with every foot it traversed. To stop the thing was impossible, and if it turned over at its present rate of speed—well, even a Cape waggon must have been knocked into atoms.

It was an exciting time for the owner, I can assure you, witnessing his bullocks doing their best to maim, or even kill one another, and the conveyance that contained all his worldly goods rushing headlong on to probable destruction or a watery grave.

I was between Scylla and Charybdis. Which danger most required my presence I could not for some seconds determine; however, the beasts ultimately gained the day. Driver, foreloper, Griquas, as well as myself, had thought the same; but with all our united efforts it took a quarter of an hour to get one ox off his back, to free another's leg, or release an unfortunate who had a half-hitch of the treck-toe about his loins. When order had been restored, it naturally arose to all to ask the question, what had become of the waggon? This was soon ascertained, for it had continued its downward course till it had reached the stream, into which it had dived with such violence that the fore-wheels were out of sight and the floor-boards, fore and aft, submerged several inches. Like certain voyagers of old, we

all sat and prayed for break of day. Yes, we even did more—lit fires, began cooking, and sought consolation in the pipe.

But even now the oxen would not be comforted; in every shadow they saw an enemy, and struggled most vigorously to tear away. There was just a possibility that hyenas or lions were about, but our fires and the lightness of the night, forbade the chance of their making a raid upon us.

At length day broke and all turned to with pick and shovel, and so successful were our efforts that ere the sun rose we had succeeded in drawing the waggon to the other shore. After breakfast I went to work to make a new dissel-boom, the Griquas started to hunt for something substantial to fill the flesh-pots with, and the boys to replace the broken *reims*. My labour progressed rapidly enough, although the mosquitoes were very troublesome, and I already commenced to think my labour half finished, when the two hunters hurriedly but silently stole down the opposite bank, waded the stream and hastened to join me. One glance at their faces told me that they had news of importance: it was so, they had come across elephants close at hand, and among the herd was the finest tusker they had ever seen. "His spoor is so broad," said one, producing a twig. This, by the tape line, was almost two

feet. That multiplied by three for circumference and doubled again, would give the animal a height of nearly twelve feet. This was assuredly a prize worth going after ; but there was no need of hurry for an hour or two, as, being undisturbed, they would not leave their present retreat till three, or possibly four, in the afternoon. After lunch, and provided with a good supply of ammunition, with blankets and food in case the chase was prolonged, we sallied forth, high in hope at coming back richer if not happier men.

On reaching where the casualty to the waggon occurred there was abundance of elephant spoor across our track, and just of that age as to cause us to conclude that it was these mammoths that had been instrumental in giving us all the trouble of the previous night.

I have never shot an elephant, even the heaviest tusker, without regret ; they are so wondrously sagacious and affectionate to each other ; moreover, if left alone, in my belief, will molest or interfere with nothing. The stories of rogues I do not believe in, but the foundation for their existence originates, doubtlessly, from the circumstance that the very old males from indolence drop behind the herd to which they belong, at the same time they are always aware to a nicety where they can join it when desired. This almost looks as if they had the power of communicating to each other

the desired road to travel, and where the midday halting places are to be made.

But to the hunt. The herd was easily found, but the giant tusker's situation was such, that it appeared impossible to approach him without alarming some of the smaller members of it, when a signal of alarm would unquestionably be given and produce an immediate stampede.

After a consultation with my companions it was resolved to remain *perdu* till they recommenced their line of march, as in all probability the veteran would be among those that brought up the rear, if not actually the last.

We had not long to wait, and our surmises turned out exactly as anticipated, so, after a cautious stalk of over a couple of hundred yards I was within twenty paces of the game, and a grand beast he truly was. Aiming behind the shoulder, I pressed the trigger, with the report the giant staggered, almost fell, but instantly recovered himself, when I put in the second barrel, which resulted in a most vicious charge into the centre of the smoke, which hung heavily on the ground, for I do not believe I had yet been seen ; whether or no, it was a near thing to terminating my earthly career, for without exaggeration the right fore-foot was placed on the ground, in his rapid passage past me, within three feet of my hiding-place. So great was his wrath that his

trumpeting might have been heard a mile off. I had scarcely time to replace my cartridges when the report of the big gun was heard, but it seemed to have no other effect than to increase the anger of the stricken beast, who again charged, in the hope of discovering his ambushed foe. The result of this was that he winded one of my attendants, and, without a moment's hesitation, made for his hiding-place, this enabled me to fire a right and left into his fore-shoulder, both bullets hitting what I considered the most vital part, but to my chagrin it did not for a moment impede his course, so the Griqua was compelled to take to his heels and run for his bare life. An African elephant is wonderfully quick in his movements, and in such a race on level ground man stands but a poor chance. It was a terrible moment, every instant I expected to see the poor fellow overtaken and trodden to death, for but a few yards severed the pursued and his foe, when a fortunate circumstance occurred, scarcely to have been hoped for, a trifling circumstance it is true, still sufficient to save a man's life. As the hunter fled he dropped his blanket (as I afterwards learned intentionally) which the wounded beast seized, threw in the air, and ultimately trampled and tore into shreds, trumpeting and screaming during this performance with a shrillness and energy I had never previously seen equalled.

But this delay, short as it was, was sufficient for the Griqua to obtain a sanctuary among the branches of a mimosa.

It may well be asked, what was I about all this time? simply doing nothing, being over a hundred yards from the enemy, and in whose vicinity there was nothing that I could avail myself of to enable me to approach closer. Of course, if my man's position had remained critical, I should have risked everything, but now he was safe I did not feel called upon to run into such imminent danger. With an Asiatic elephant it would have been different, for the forehead shot with them is the most fatal, but with the African, to aim there, however close, is simply a throwing away of powder and lead.

The rending of the blanket took but a few seconds, when the gallant brute, with his immense ears at right angles, rapidly departed in pursuit of the herd, looking, as he really was, master of the field.

A council of war was now held, the result being that we should at once follow the spoor, and, if needs be, sleep on it that night, trusting to find the grand old fellow dead, or at least in better and more suitable ground in which to renew the war.

From the length of the elephant's stride and its regularity, it was evident that he was in haste,

and not badly wounded, and, as is the case in all stern chases, this was a long affair. The Griquas were splendid trackers, but we had received an addition to our party who even surpassed them, this was a thorough specimen of the Desert bushman, a dwarf, thick-set, filthy little wretch, who had been attracted by our firing, and consequently anticipated an abundant supply of meat. At sundown we made a couple of fires, and rolled in a blanket I slept as soundly, aye, and far more so, than I have on many a luxurious couch. Break of day saw us again in pursuit, and at nine o'clock we sighted the tusker, who was now accompanied by a companion. The poor old fellow looked fearfully seedy. The friend seemed aware of it, and appeared to urge upon him the necessity of more rapid flight.

Here was a difficulty we had not contemplated, for it was a moral certainty that we should find an active and vindictive foe in this second beast. While the bushman and Griquas diverted the attention of the new arrival, I ran forward and fired two shots at my old friend, but he appeared to bear a charmed life, the only reply to the fusilade being a feeble attempt at a charge.

It was easy to see that his days were numbered, and that death must soon supervene, yet it was only charity to put the poor thing out of pain, which I did by giving him a bullet between the

ear and eye. Game to the last, he again made an effort to meet the foe, but strength failed, and he gradually sank to the ground, life having fled almost before his carcase reached it. This unquestionably was the celebrated tusker I had heard of, and his ivories certainly deserved the reputation they had won ; for all that, I could not help feeling guilty in sacrificing such a noble brute for the sake of filthy lucre.

While I was playing my part, my boys were having an exciting time with the other elephant, who was as game and more active than his aged relative ; already he had received two shots out of the big rifle, but they did not appear to have done very serious harm, for the infuriated animal was charging wherever a foe showed himself.

The presence of mind and activity of the little bushman reminded me of some of the celebrities of the bull-ring in Spain—for the little wretch might be said almost to play with the giant beast, into which he had thrown his three little assegais. But the drama soon ended, for my first shot terminated the fight. The ivories of the last weighed about thirty pounds each, so the value of the spoils of that morning were worth considerably over £100.

I remained by the slaughtered game, but the waggon which I sent for came up before night-fall, so I had the luxury of a good supper and

change of clothes. But the pleasure of these was rather damped. During my absence a lion had killed my best after ox. Such I find ever to be the case, if I am absent for a night, some accident or other occurs, and ever the result of carelessness among my people when not under their master's eye.

To no animal does the elephant appear to have such an intense dislike as the dog, and the result of this is that many hunters, who look for profit and not sport employ them constantly when engaged in shooting the lord of the forest. Dogs destined for this purpose soon learn their work, and enter into it with evident enjoyment. One or two lessons are sufficient to make the pupil perfect, particularly if accompanied by a comrade that has had experience. I was several times present when they were employed by both Boer and native hunters, and never was more surprised than to witness the egregious folly of an animal accredited as the most sagacious of quadrupeds.

When the trail or spoor was discovered the curs were let loose, and off they went upon the fresh scent as rapidly as their legs could carry them. Superior speed soon brought them up with the foe, when barking, snapping, and even biting at once brought the antagonist to bay. In this position the poor beast would be surrounded, some badgering and threatening him in front, while

others snapped at his heels. Again he would single out one as the special object of his wrath, and fruitlessly pursue him for twenty or thirty paces, of course by such a step leaving his rear open for fresh indignities. Again, the irritated animal would fall on one knee, then on another, as if in anticipation of crushing his diminutive foes under them. These devices having failed, he would place his head against a small tree, and bring all his powers to bear against it, as if hoping that in its fall it would crush some of its tormentors.

While the giant is being thus assailed the hunter can, without the least apprehension, approach within short distance of the quarry as almost to make certain of killing it at the first shot.

It is needless to make any comments upon such a mode of butchery, for nothing else can it be called; the Kaffirs themselves condemn it so strongly, that, in speaking of a coward, they use the expression, "Oh, he is just such a man as would hunt elephants with dogs!"

The best of authorities on the subject state that the Indian elephant, when in pursuit of a human being who has wounded him, or come between him and his dignity, does not use his trunk as a weapon, or even a hand, but on the contrary curls it up to protect it from injury. Now this is exactly the reverse of the African's employment of this wonderful arm, for with it

he will seize and hurl his victim in the air, or, using it again as a club, strike down with irresistible force an animal as large as a horse.

In comparing these two species, there is no doubt but that the African is far the most dangerous antagonist when his wrath has been aroused, and for the following reasons: he is much larger, and from that may be inferred, possessed of more vitality; the forehead shot is next to useless against him; and thirdly, he is much more swift, being able for several hundred yards to keep an ordinary horse at a sharp canter to elude becoming on closer terms.

On the other hand, I do not believe that the African elephant is ever guilty of taking human life, unless in retaliation for an assault upon himself; thus, like the majority of giants, he is slow to take offence, but once arouse his wrath, he is as prompt as he is capable of obtaining retribution.

It is a great pity that steps cannot be taken to domesticate this noblest, as it is the greatest, of animals, for I feel convinced that it would be to Africa what the camel is to the desert, the horse to the plains, the dog to the Esquimaux, the reindeer to the Laplander.

In all the works of the Creator there is a purpose, may it not therefore have been the divine intention that the elephant was to be the means by which those parts of Africa the most remote



and difficult of access were to be opened up to Christianity and civilization ?

There are still numerous enormous herds of these noble animals to be found on the Zambezi, and by ingratiating ourselves by means of presents, or paying a royalty on each animal captured to Leubingulo or Simpopo, kedahs could easily be erected ; for, once gain the goodwill of the kings, there are thousands of their people who would only be too glad to obtain employment for the most moderate recompense. And, when once it became known to these astute savages that more was to be gained by capturing elephants alive than by their slaughter for ivory, the indiscriminate killing that exists at the present time would immediately cease, and the barriers of tsetse-fly, and the hostility of petty hostile chiefs to the introduction of our manufactures to the unknown interior, for ever be removed.

That this animal has been domesticated is a fact indisputable, if we are to give credit to the relief designs upon Roman coins, struck about the middle of the second century of the Christian era, for the animals defined on them have the unmistakable large ear characteristic of the race peculiar to the "Dark Continent."



AN ANT-HILL MADE USEFUL.

RHINOCEROS.



Few large animals are less difficult to kill than the rhinoceros, at the same time they are so wonderfully plucky that they afford excellent sport to those fond of slaying large game.

At sunrise one morning, with a couple of newly-arrived bushmen, I went off to view some high coppies that lay to the north-east. They appeared like the débris of several immense quarries carelessly thrown upon the plain. Here lay at hand the material to build a city without the trouble of quarrying. Frequently throughout this country this phenomenon occurs, and I am at a loss to account for it, unless it is caused by an upheaval produced by earthquakes. On approaching the first coppy, one of the bushmen became excited, and pointed out something, then his companion followed suit, but for all that my eyes refused to see what theirs did.

These children of the desert have wonderfully sharp vision, being in that respect very much the superior of the white man. Advancing about

fifty yards they again stopped. Taking the line that they pointed out, all I could distinguish was what appeared to me a large black stone. But the stone moved, it was a rhinoceros. I was off the mare in a moment, and leaving her with the bridle hanging between her legs, stalked forward to get a clear shot. The game which had been lying down rose on its fore legs, as a fat pig might do, and carelessly looked about. Doubtless, owing to its hearing or wonderful gift of scent, it had some idea that intruders were in the neighbourhood, yet it did not display the slightest indication of fear. It certainly had not seen us, but with these animals that is not always necessary to induce them to take the initiative, and commence hostilities. I was now within sixty paces, and had a good tree at my back to take shelter in if my two barrels did not effectually do their work. I aimed at the thick part of the neck in front of the shoulder, and about two hands beneath the line of the withers. My gun was one of the eight-bores, which, with ten drachms of Curtis and Harvey behind the bullet, was a most destructive weapon ; but it required some substance in the shooter to resist the recoil. Taking a very steady, careful aim, I fired. The bullet told loudly, and the large swinish-looking beast simply shoved his fore legs out in front of him, and apparently settled down for another nap.

There was no hurry, no alarm in the action, and I was astonished. Reloading, I thought I would try if the brute treated the contents of the left-hand barrel so cavalierly. No more notice of it was taken than if it had been a mosquito; even the rhinoceros bird moved about its master's back as intent on his avocation as he had doubtlessly been for many a previous week.

Being again prepared for anything that might occur, I approached, the bushmen preceding me by some distance; they took one or two suspicious glances, and then ran up, not, as I expected, to throw their assegais, but actually to get on the carcase. The beast was dead, killed dead in an instant, a little flowing blood on the nostrils and lips, save the heat of the body, being the only indication that it had so lately lived.

On my return journey from the interior of Africa, in 1876, the following amusing incident took place:—

Plenty of meat hung to the waggon, and, as on the previous evening, the boys and foreloper (for that worthy had turned up when he found me resolved to go), built an enormous fire close by, and between eating and shouting kept me awake. Towards daylight, this was still going on when I heard several exclamations of terror. I looked out of the front of the waggon. The natives were flying helter-skelter everywhere, and a

rhinoceros was trotting backwards and forwards across the fire, tossing carrosses, skins, cooking utensils, and blankets about as if they each contained some body.

From England I had brought several red blankets, one of which, in a weak moment, I gave to Umganey. As it lay beside the fire it seemed to particularly take the fancy of the irate beast. At it he went, got his horn well into it, but there it seemed to stick, the more he shook his head, the more it seemed tightly to wrap itself around it, entirely hiding the eyes. A struggle or two more was made, but still without avail, and the rhinoceros, ever grotesque, and more so under present circumstances than ever I saw it before, with a snort, bound, and kick, started off as hard as he could go for the sombre shadows of the forest, with a two-ounce bullet behind his shoulder. How he escaped knocking that ornamental headpiece of his against a tree, an accident which did not occur as long as he was in sight, was truly wonderful.

In the morning he was found dead.

The following I think will well exemplify that Mr. Rhino is not quite the kind of beast a nervous man or bad shot can take liberties with.

A little before sunset the guide, against my wishes, shot at a rhinoceros. It was in sight of the waggon for upwards of an hour, and I was having

a most careful survey of its manner through my field-glass, when he discovered it, and in spite of all I could say, go he would. We had such a quantity of meat already that it was really committing a positive sin to take any more animal life, so I was nearly having a row with the fellow to enforce my orders. However, I thought it was better to avoid a disturbance with so valuable a servant. His disobedience, nevertheless, very nearly cost him dear, for at the first shot he only wounded the beast, which charged at the smoke, winded him, and coursed him in grand style over velt. At length he managed to dodge, and while the vicious beast was poking about the bushes looking for its late foe, the guide put in a second shot, but with no better success. Again he was hunted, and in his excitement and fear made straight for the encampment. At one moment I thought the brute had him, but a quick turn saved his bacon. At this moment all the dogs came up, and the rhinoceros's attention became fully occupied with the noisy pack. To my annoyance the infuriated beast a second time directed its step towards us, so to avoid it running amuck through my property, which it doubtlessly would have done, I took a four-bore, loaded with ten drachms of powder, availed myself of the shelter of some thick mapaney brush and an ant-hill, and took aim. I pressed the trigger, and, my good-

ness! I received a blow on the shoulder that completely floored me, the gun at the same time springing out of my hand, and tearing a couple of inches of skin off the inside of my finger. As for the game, it never knew how it had been converted into meat. After this exploit I kept that gun for the use of friends and refractory servants who were fond of sport, and it certainly afforded this in more ways than one.

The rhinoceros of Africa must not be confounded with that of India, none of the former possessing the shields which are characteristic of the latter. Moreover, the first mentioned are all two-horned, and I would divide them into four distinct species, although authorities have asserted that the subdivision should be five. Why I think differently from some well-known naturalists is that I have never seen but four, and no horns that indicated that I had not become acquainted with all the varieties.

The natives, more particularly the bushmen, are close observers of all connected with the animal kingdom, and Mashoonas, Macalacas, and Massaras acknowledge the division I have accepted.

This animal is now getting scarce south of the Zambezi, as it has been most ruthlessly slaughtered by the natives since they became possessed of fire-arms.

In Bechuana Land, at one time, a law existed that no young man could marry till he killed a rhinoceros, thus, as may be imagined, the poor creatures were not spared. It must have been an exciting sight to see the active youth stealing upon his formidable prey, availing himself of every bush and ant-hill to approach the vicious and active monster without being observed, then the fatal thrust must have been in all but rare occasions followed by an immediate pursuit, equally extraordinary for its velocity as for its persistence. Again and again would this scene have to be repeated, till the giant, worn out and exhausted from loss of blood, ultimately bit the dust.

Another reason that exists for the rhinoceros's destruction is that its flesh is most palatable, and is alike esteemed by Boer and native.

To me it tastes like very delicate pork, if anything better, and certainly is much more palatable and succulent than that of any of the antelope family. Moreover, it never palls upon the taste, and although I have eaten it for weeks in succession, I was ever ready to welcome it as the *pièce de résistance* on my return to camp after a long and trying day.

About five years ago I was hunting in the Massara *veldt*. Game of every description was more than usually abundant, and I had a staff with me of the most skilful hunters and trackers

to be found in tropical South Africa. These bushmen must not be confused with the pigmies to be found north and on the borders of the Old Colony, who are a most debased, filthy tribe, seldom armed with anything except a bow and poisoned arrows, living in caves, with their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them. No, my Massara bushmen were grand fellows, many of them standing six feet in height, with a magnificent development of chest and limb. True they were most erratic, changing their residences every few days, for as the game moved its position they followed on its spoor. Much inconvenience did not result from this, for they were ever satisfied with a few bushes and weeds to windward, and a fire at their feet, to feel comfortably housed. A very few of these men had guns obtained from their chief, at Bamanwatto, but these were of the most villanous description, and generally of Portuguese manufacture, quite as likely to be injurious to the shooter as to the object fired at. This being the case, I had little to expect in the way of assistance, provided I was attacked by any dangerous animal, except what they could afford me with their assegais.

Soon after break of day I left my waggons, attended by about two dozen of these swarthy fellows, each full of glee at the anticipation of

the coming sport. What a pity it is that they are so redolent ; it interferes so much in making boon companions of them, for jovial companions they can be when the day's work is done, and the deeds of the previous day are being discussed. Time after time I have laughed almost to split my sides, when witnessing the antics they would cut when in a spirit of mimicry they would exhibit to each other how this rhinoceros or that elephant behaved before it was laid low.

A glorious sunrise, the equal to which can only be witnessed on the plateaus in the interior of this continent, greeted us on this occasion ; while the air was so cool, yet balmy, that each individual felt equal to any task that might be imposed upon him. It was quite a red-letter day in my diary, for fresh spoor was almost immediately found, and that of the description of animals that I most anxiously sought for—viz., giraffe, for the cows are most excellent eating ; but the bulls, phaw ! require the strong stomach of a native to be able to enjoy it.

After an hour's spooring we overtook the quarry, they were quietly grazing on the foliage of some scattered mimosa trees. Dismounting without difficulty, I succeeded in getting within a hundred and fifty yards of the game, when a well-planted No. 8 bullet laid a three-parts-grown cow on the ground. Here our morning's work would

have terminated but that some of the hunters viewed a buffalo, and off they darted after it like greyhounds from the slips. Being desirous of seeing the sport, I jumped upon my little mare and followed in the rear, for I was confident that these dare-devils were going to make the hazardous attempt of killing this most dangerous of beasts with their assegais. The bull, which was a very large one, did not appear to be aware that he was pursued, for with the utmost *sang-froid* he entered a clump of bush, the most dangerous course for his safety that he could have selected, for among the cover his agile pursuers could dodge with comparative safety the precipitous and irresistible charges of this bellicose beast. The wind just suited our purpose, for I rode within fifty yards of the buffalo without being perceived; but when that space separated me, 'T'om, an athletic scamp ever up to mischief, was only a few feet from the unsuspecting prey. To attain this proximity, he had crawled on hands and knees for some distance. I saw him drop on all fours; from that moment I lost sight of the daring fellow, and of half-a-dozen others in close attendance. Suddenly the bull stopped. The abruptness of the halt told me that the brute apprehended danger, and was prepared for any emergency. However, seeing nothing and scenting nothing, he resumed gathering his morning's

repast. But scarcely had he plucked the first mouthful when Tom sprung to his feet, and in an instant had buried his spear deep in the foe's flank. Quick almost as lightning the plucky hunter was charged with a velocity that has to be seen to be believed; but the pursuer in doing so had not seen that other foes were at hand, who each gave him an assegai as he passed.

The poor stricken brute had now no less than six of these fearful weapons fast in his flank and shoulder, but that did not deter him from coursing Tom magnificently round all the adjoining trees. However, our hero soon got an opportunity he had anticipated, for with the dexterity of an ape he sprung into the fork of a mimosa, where he was safe from further danger. But the buffalo was not satisfied; he butted the tree with a force that would have stove in the bulk-head of a steamship, but while thus engaged the other enemies again stole upon him, and plied the gallant animal with more steel. Another of the Massara was in turn hunted, and again a third, till the excitement and novelty wore off, and pity for the gallant beast took its place. So dismounting, and leaving the pony, I succeeded in stealing within short range of the poor thing which had fought so noble a fight, and dropped it to shot with a two-ounce bullet driven by

eight drachms of powder, lodged a few inches behind the corner of the bladebone.

Time had so rapidly passed that I was surprised to observe the altitude of the sun, so, as the heat was becoming very severe, I sent a message to the waggon for my personal servant to bring without delay food for myself and mare. A most charming hollow, that looked like a defunct water-course being near it, was selected for an *al fresco* camping-place. Shady trees were in abundance, so none were long in making themselves comfortable. It is astonishing to the unsophisticated how soon these savages get their fires lighted and strings of meat broiling on its embers, for although they do not hesitate to eat meat raw, still, if a chance is offered them, I believe they prefer it a little scorched.

In time my food arrived, and with it all the wives and female attachments of my hunters, for although the Massara's life appears one uninterrupted succession of picnics, still this appeared an exceptional occasion, and all went merrily as a marriage bell.

A bushman's appetite seems to me to be gauged by the amount of food that is obtainable, not by the requirements of the body; thus, it can scarcely be wondered at that, when the entire carcase of a fat buffalo was there to be disposed of in a short time, many felt

very indisposed to, in fact incapable of, active exertion.

I nearly reached the end of my cheroot when a cry arose that a rhinoceros was coming that way. Springing to my feet I found that such was the case, so shoving the double-barrel eight-bore into Tom's hands, I grasped my single four-bore and hurried to intercept the brute's progress, well knowing that if such was not speedily done it would unquestionably enter our place of repose and scatter food and even firing, in slang parlance, "all over the shop."

Till only a hundred yards intervened between me and the unwelcome visitor did I discover that she was accompanied by a baby, about the size of a Newfoundland dog; this made affairs more serious still, for mammas are apt to be more pugnacious when accompanied by their progeny.

Let me say a word about the four-bore; it was too light for shooting large charges, thus kicked fearfully when twelve drachms of powder were behind its bullet, still, if held straight, it sent its leaden messenger direct to the place intended. Now, on this occasion, I have reason to believe that it had obtained its full portion of propelling power; thus, when I aimed at the beast the barrel sprung to the right from some unknown cause, and the bullet hit the old lady on the posterior horn. The result was almost a ludicrous ex-

hibition of activity and indignation ; she wheeled about and danced about if not exactly like Jim Crow, the reason was that she did not belong to the same genus. Even the infant rhinoceros stood awed at the vagaries and unprecedented activity of its staid mother. However, immediately afterwards the eight-bore was shoved into my hand by bushman Tom, who, confident I would bring the quarry down at the next shot, heedlessly exposed himself to view, when he was at once charged by the infuriated maternal parent, closely followed by her hopeful bairn. Somehow or other the indignant old lady lost sight of her intended prey, and pursued her way towards our late breakfasting ground. By Jove! I thought to myself that she would have a drive at the mare which I left tied to an adjoining tree, so I hurriedly took a long shot, but though the bullet told, I felt convinced it was placed too far back. The fusilade, nevertheless, had had its effect, for all my lazy curs, aroused from their slumbers by the report of my guns, came forth to see what was the matter, and perceiving the baby rhinoceros, immediately made an onslaught upon it. This stopped the vindictive parent, who devoted herself some minutes to charging the dogs, thus affording me time to reload and re-appear upon the scene of action. Making a hasty shot, more by good luck than by good guidance, I hit the irate parent

a little behind the back of the ear, this sent her sprawling upon her back, from which undignified position she never succeeded in regaining her legs.

After a great deal of trouble and an immense amount of amusement, the youngster was secured, and in a few days became as familiar with cattle, horses and dogs, as if he had been born and brought up amongst them. I had much desire to bring this amusing and interesting pet home, but it died within a fortnight of its capture from a severe attack of diarrhœa, to which young African elephants are equally subject.

In allusion to that day's hunt, I have not stated that on our way back to the waggons, elands, pallas, and zebra, might have been easily shot; in fact, it was, as I have previously said, a regular red-letter day in a sportsman's experiences; but the only thing I pulled a trigger upon was an immense spotted hyæna, which I had the luck to destroy at a distance of eighty or ninety yards; of which act I was not a little proud, for the shot was more than a fair one, and the brute that it had bowled over was one of the most blood-thirsty and cowardly carnivora on the face of the earth.

The Indian rhinoceros much resembles its African cousin, as will be observed from the following adventure of Col. Pollock, described in his interesting work "Shooting in Burmah."

“ On the ninth, we started at daybreak, going along the banks of a stream, and soon hit off a trail, Macdonald leading, and I slightly on one side, ready to pour in a volley if required. We came on the beast, a male, in about an hour; Macdonald fired and hit; the beast bolted into grass about twenty feet high, and into this we followed, but the tracks were so numerous, we soon lost our quarry; beating our way through the grass, however, we came to an unusually heavy bit, and into this Mainah refused to enter, and my elephant hung back too. So we knew there was something ahead of us. As the mahout would not drive Mainah in, Sookur called out—‘Get out of the way; it is you who are afraid, and not the elephant!’ and giving Lutchmee a few vigorous prods, he drove her headlong into the entangled grass. I looked about everywhere, and had perhaps gone through half the patch without seeing anything, when something induced me to look back, and there, within ten yards of me, was a full-grown rhinoceros, craning its neck and staring up at me in a peculiarly idiotic mannner; a lucky shot dropped her dead, and I then saw she had a young one by her side. So leaving the carcass and the young one undisturbed, we sent an elephant back to the village for nets and men to catch the little one, and went on ourselves. It was a nasty damp drizzly day, with a high wind

blowing, so after a while we determined to return to camp; but coming on two quite fresh marks we could not resist the temptation, and took up the trail, Macdonald leading. We had to go farther than we expected, and soon came to very heavy grass, when Mainah turned off suddenly to the left and went off full score. I called out, 'where are you going to?—that is not the way the rhinos have gone,' but I got no reply; and the elephant and his rider vanished. Sookur, after abusing Mainah's mahout, went straight on, and within one hundred yards I came upon two full-grown rhinos standing together, with their heads towards me; but the grass was so high, that all that I could see was their huge ears and a dusky form, but guessing for the chest of the larger, I fired: a shriek and a headlong charge was the result. Lutchmee spun round like a teetotum, and went off at her best pace; I had just time to turn round and let drive, as rhino's nose was within a few inches of my elephant's posterior. I was using a two-groove No. 10 rifle, by Lang, the bullets hardened with a mixture of quicksilver; the ball entered the back, and passing out at the belly, floored my antagonist; but the row she made frightened Lutchmee to such an extent, it was some time before I could get her back. The rhino had picked itself up, and stood at bay in some very heavy grass. Every time I

went towards it it made its peculiar cry and charged, and off would go my elephant; so seeing that the animal could not escape, and not wishing to get my elephant cut for nothing, I left it, and went back to our huts. I picked the rhino up two days afterwards, dead, where our encounter had taken place. I bathed and breakfasted, and still Macdonald did not appear, but as he had our breakfast-basket behind his howdah, containing all that was requisite to refresh the inner man, even to a bottle of champagne, I knew he was all right as far as food went, but wondered at his absence. He returned about six in the evening. It appears Mainah had turned off as soon as he smelt the rhinos, and going at his best pace straight across country, had returned to our yesterday's camp, some twelve miles off; crossing in his course several nasty nullahs without slackening his speed, and shaking Macdonald into a jelly. The mahout appeared to have lost all control over him, but on reaching the place where we had encamped at Soonapilly he pulled up, but nothing would induce him to return the way he had come. So Macdonald got off, bathed and breakfasted, and after resting his weary limbs a while, returned by a long circuitous route—even then Mainah would not move without some men in front of him! Now what had upset this really stanch animal? I can

only account for it in this way : Macdonald had a theory (knowing how fond of opium the Asamese are, and what quantities they are in the habit of eating daily) that if he took some of this drug with him, and kept doling it out, the mahout's zeal and pluck would be increased. I fancy he gave no thought to the man's private supply, and so every now and then gave the mahout a bit ; this, together with what the man had had previously, I believe proved too much for him, he lost his nerve, and communicated his funk to the animal he bestrode. I have seen Mainah frequently since, in several scimmages with tigers, buffaloes, and rhinos, and he never showed the least fear again, and that too with the same mahout on his back. During the night, the villagers brought in the young rhino, and when I saw him the next morning, he was the impersonification of all that is savage ; he was securely tethered, but he tried to get at everybody that went near him. A tiger could not have been more savage, yet in the course of a couple of days he quieted down, ate plantains out of the hand, and in a week would follow Sookur about everywhere. I sold him afterwards to Jamrach's agent for £60, and I believe I ought to have got double that ; so, apart from the sport of shooting the large animals, the catching of the young ones would prove a profitable speculation."

LIONS.

I DARESAY many will differ from me, but the following is a classification I should make of the South African lion : the black-maned, the yellow-maned, and the maneless.

The first animal stands high on his legs, in fact is the tallest of the race, lightest in the limb, most active and most courageous. I think that this beast hunts for pleasure as well as profit. I would not say that every day this occurs, but that frequently it is instigated by a love of the chase, and it undertakes it, or makes a descent on a bullock train, for the sake of the fun that it has in slaughtering. As far as man is concerned, this is the most venturesome brute, and consequently the most to be dreaded.

The next is the yellow-maned lion, an uncouth, great powerful beast, massive in limbs and neck, and enormous in its girth of chest, but always possessed of a hollow back, and looks extremely weak across the coupling. This animal will attack anything, but it wants hunger to wake it up



HER MAJESTY OBJECTS TO INTRUDERS.

from its lethargy. Not that it is a coward—far from it—but a lazy beast, who loves ease, and will not take exercise until compelled to do so to support the demands of Nature.

The first, or dark-maned lion, will get into a kraal, seize an ox or a calf, and take it away with him ; the second will eat it, if hungry, where slaughtered, and defy fifty men to prevent him. The latter at such a time, can as easily be shot as a familiar bullock or horse ; the former is always on the *qui vive*, and until he is prostrate on the ground, and the white stripe along his belly is conspicuous, look out, for if he has a kick in him, and can do mischief, he will.

The yellow lion will give up life in a respectable way, not as a coward, but as one resigned to circumstances. The black-maned will fight on to the bitter end, even although every effort it makes causes its heart's blood to flow upon the velt, and hastens dissolution.

The one, in fact, is the hero, who does his best in the fight and succumbs to the odds ; the other is the Malay who *runs amuck* and buries his creese in whatever approaches him while he possesses a hand to move.

But the maneless lion, more like—with the exception of the size of his head—a panther than the others I have spoken of, possesses all the stealth and cunning of the animal he resembles; his habits

are possibly more nocturnal, and he is seldom heard to howl. He will attack man if wounded or coerced, but not under other circumstances; his activity is immense, and his power commensurate with it. Bushmen say that he will lodge in the lower branches of a tree; of this I have not had evidence, but these people are keen observers of the animal kingdom, and seldom tell untruths upon the subject.

If the Guzerat or maneless lion of India is a distinct species, then its representative in Africa is the same. Your stay-at-home naturalists oppose everything they do not know; but if to them we had to trust for information, we should be as ignorant at the present day as we were a thousand years ago.

The Kaffirs and their kindred tribes, who are such admirable practical naturalists that they can imitate the actions and voice of all the wild animals that exist in their vicinity—and do it so perfectly that they will *charm* the most experienced practical observer—recognize this distinction—namely, that there is a maneless lion, and that it is a distinct breed from the other species found in their land.

In the Great Thirst Land, on the Kalahari Desert, I believe that the lion attains greater magnitude—in fact, greater perfection—than he does anywhere else in the world, except possibly

in the Atlas range of mountains in North Africa. The reason of this is obvious ; to support himself he must hunt, and with a due amount of exercise—just sufficient to keep his body in a proper state of health—he can obtain a sufficiency of animal food. The nature of the country makes this so, while the climate on these table-lands is not enervating, but the reverse, making exercise desirable and pleasant.

The temperature during the day may not unusually rise to 96°, but invariably at night, especially towards the morning, descends to 70° or thereabouts. Thus the lion does not lead a life of indolence here, necessity compelling him to seek his food, and not to lie in wait for it.

On the Nile and other bottom lands, where the vegetation is extremely dense and game abundant, with cover in such luxuriance that places of ambush can everywhere be found, this animal suits itself to circumstances, procures his meal, and sleeps until he again feels the calls of hunger. Day after day is this repeated till it becomes the experience of a lifetime. But this is not the existence which develops muscle, or produces activity, or engenders growth. No, the lion of the Great Thirst Land is as much the king of lions as the lion is the king of beasts.

In the Atlas Mountains the black-maned lion is invariably found, on the Congo and Niger the

yellow-maned, and here both. This is not to be wondered at when we perceive that the country, although within the tropics, is possessed of a sub-tropical climate.

The southern hemisphere is not like the northern; the immense fields of ice that gird it with almost a total absence of land cause the cold winds to penetrate a great many degrees farther to the equator than they would in the north.

The mountains opposite Cape Town, not higher than the Grampian Hills in Scotland, and in about 34° S. latitude, I have seen covered with snow. Where, in similar elevation and in similar latitude can you find the same thing north of the tropic of Cancer?

Although I confidently believe that any man with ordinary courage may travel in Africa without the slightest danger from lions if he takes proper precaution; still, if you will shoot at them, and possibly in doing so wound them, look out, for you have a devil incarnate to face, who will only be satisfied with your heart's blood.

The artfulness of lions in effecting the capture of their prey is very wonderful. The inferior races of animals we accredit with instinct, yet are denied reasoning powers. It requires a very acute discrimination to tell where the one terminates and the other begins; nor have I

found anyone who could instruct me on the subject.

It is a well-known fact that the sense of smell produces more fear in the animal creation than that of sight. It may be accounted for in this way. When they see a danger they can avoid it by the employment of such means as the Creator has given them, but when they scent it, they cannot tell how close or how far off it may be with any degree of certainty.

However, this peculiarity the lion is well aware of, and thus utilizes it, for these animals nearly always hunt in troops or parties of five, six, or seven. One of these is invariably a mature male—not unfrequently an old one. We will suppose that night has set in, the weather is blustery, with possibly rain, and all is dark as ink. The happy family go forth. In their travels they discover a trader or Boer outspanned. The cattle are tied up short to their treck-toe, the end of which is made fast to a tree, and the brake is tightly fastened on the hind wheels. The marauders hold a consultation and particularly note the direction of the wind.

Their plan of action is then brought into play.

The females and younger and more active males silently steal off and secrete themselves down wind, possibly a hundred yards below the unsuspecting bullocks, who are probably all lying

down chewing the cud, with their backs to the wind, and their keen eyes staring into the darkness to leeward. The reason of this is that they do not dread danger from behind, for their powers of scent and hearing will give them ample warning; while to their vision alone can they trust for safety from the attack of their stealthy foes in that direction.

At length the party have got to their lurking places. The "old veteran" goes to windward of the oxen, and approaches fearlessly towards them, shaking his mane out that the breeze may carry as much as possible of his effluvia to the intended victims.

When the first taint of this strikes their nostrils, every bullock springs to his feet and faces the danger. Closer and closer approaches the old lion, and the smell of him becomes stronger and stronger. The bullocks simultaneously make a rush; they are, however, well secured, and none succeed in breaking loose. But the tawny bloodthirsty marauder has not yet played his trump card. Up he approaches closer, again shakes his mane and roars. That is the climax. If your *reims* are not the best—and those made of buffalo hide are to be preferred—the violence with which the cattle rush to avoid the threatening danger will enable them to break loose, when the whole team will

tear off down wind, running almost into the jaws of their foes. In such a stampede as this—in fact, nearly in all instances—it is the flank of the victim that is first seized, and several unite together to pull down the prey.

The lion unwounded is not to be feared by day, unless when the sexes are together, or inadvertently you should chance to come so close upon him when at rest that he thinks that retreat is impossible, and therefore his only safety is in doing battle. The English sportsman of average pluck need trouble his head, therefore, very little about them, or treat the probability of danger arising from them as extremely remote. They are, moreover, a large object to aim at, and although doubtless possessed of great vitality, do not have it to the same extent as their beautifully striped *confrères* of the East. Again, their activity is not equal to that of the tiger, or the grizzly bear of the Rocky Mountains. The charge *par excellence* of all the *Felidæ* is that of the leopard. Its velocity is amazing—beyond belief—and while in the act does not present the easiest shot; and its power to do injury, although comparatively a small animal, cannot be overrated.

There is a famous hunter, whose exploits, if they were written, would rival those of Gordon Cumming. He fears not the lion by day, and it is said, not even by night. I have killed all

sorts of game, and to the grizzly bear of North America I give the palm for destructive qualities and vitality, and not a few of them have fallen before my rifle; but I must say, if men, constituted as I am, will follow them or lions into the bush, when darkness shrouds the landscape, they must be possessed of far more pluck, or much better powers of vision than myself.

To our narrative. The principal in it, Mr. Finnety was coming from Sechelles to Bamanwatto. After the manner of the country, he rode one horse and led the other. At Mashua vley he watered his animals, and pursued his route, doubtless hoping that night would see him at the end of his journey. He had not gone more than a mile beyond the water when two lions sprang from the bush on either side of the road, each seizing a horse. The mount that he was on fell in a moment, and shot him over its head; but the hunter was on his feet in a trivet. With the right barrel he killed the assailant of the horse he was riding, with the left the brute that attacked the led horse. So quick was the whole done that neither of the nags was injured.

The exploits of Mr. Finnety would require a chronicler, but another of his performances was told me by Mr. Leask, of Klerksdarp, who was with him at the time, and should not be hid from the world. The night previous, just as it was

getting dark, he shot a large white rhinoceros. As he believed his bullet had been well placed, and that in consequence it was only a matter of time for the game to fall, he deferred following it till the morning.

At break of day he started alone to find his quarry, and after going a mile or so, found it dead, with three lions around it. Mr. Finnety stalked up within a short distance of them, and killed the trio, each requiring only a single bullet.

Soon afterwards, having discovered elephant spoor, he followed it up and, after mid-day, overtook the herd, and bowled over a couple of tuskers. Retracing his steps to regain his waggon, he had to pass by the dead rhinoceros, and when doing so, found two more lions beside the carcass. These he also killed.

In the morning Mr. Finnety went out with his people to secure the ivory of the elephants slain the day before. On their route they passed a pool in a dry river bed, and by it were two large lions. He left his people, and, unsupported, walked up to them and killed them right and left. Thus seven lions fell before his gun in little over twenty-four hours. I should like to know who can show such a bag!

The following is one of my lion experiences :

As the day was not yet old, and desiring to rest my mare Ruby, I thought I would tramp on

a little farther, so passing my arm through the reins, I led the way, she following close on my heels. Among her many good qualities this was one she possessed, most valuable in a hunter's horse, and even when I would halt to shoot she would stop and never jerk back, as too many will, to the certain destruction of the aim of the marksman. Thus we had gone on possibly a mile from where we had left the sand desert, when I felt an almost imperceptible tightening of the rein across my shoulder. I turned round to see, if possible, what could be the cause, when I observed Ruby's eyes very much expanded, and gazing to our left front; following the direction indicated, about sixty yards in advance, and close to the road, I discovered a large male lion, with a magnificent dark mane.

He had already noticed our approach, and was standing up, switching his flanks, yet looking irresolute whether to retire or advance. While hesitating what was the best course of action to pursue, the king of beasts thought to intimidate me, for with a quiet, measured step he advanced, showing his teeth, and giving utterance to a short, smothered growl. Cocking my gun, I waited, resolved not to fire until the brute was within thirty yards, when, if the bullet did not do its work, the second would be delivered at a shorter range. His majesty, however, disapproved

of the position of affairs, halted, looked round to see if the way were open for retreat, turned and trotted quietly off, every few strides casting a look over his shoulder, to assure himself that he was not followed. Had the range not been so great, I should have fired; but possibly it was better I did not do so, for if I had only wounded the animal, it certainly would have been a case for the second barrel to decide whether he or I was to be killed.

This little contretemps seemed to put fresh energy into myself and mare, for when I got into the saddle, of her own accord she managed to get up a canter, which she retained for a couple of miles.

The valley that I sought could not be very distant now, and I was commencing to wonder that it had not been already reached, when I heard the tinkling of ox-bells, and soon after I saw a large mob of cattle, in charge of some Matabele herdsmen. Approaching them, I found one understood a few words of English, so I told him not to go in the direction in which the cattle were feeding, as I had just seen a lion. On that the herdsmen headed the cattle in the direction I was pursuing.

At length I recognized that the forest was becoming less dense, the renewed energy of my mare told me that she smelt water, and was

anxious to reach it, so giving her a slack rein, she broke into a gallop, and in a few minutes after was up to her knees, gulping down the craved-for liquid with apparently insatiable avidity.

I had now time to look about, and with pleasure discovered that three waggons were out-spanned close by, so I turned my steps towards them. The first I came to, the proprietor, a young Englishman of the name of Curtin, came forth and welcomed me, begging that I would become his guest till my own conveyance came up. With gratitude I accepted the kindness, so dismounted, and knee-haltered my horse. I then went to the next waggon, in which I found the proprietor, Mr. Catenby, who would hear of no refusal, but that he should become my host; but having explained how a previous arrangement would prevent this, he sent over word to the gentleman I had spoken to first, to say that he also would be one of his guests. The third waggon belonged to a Boer, who could not speak English—a fine, tall, handsome specimen of a man, with the reputation of being an excellent hunter.

I felt so thoroughly tired, that, from sheer exhaustion, I threw myself on the ground; but Mr. Catenby and Mr. Curtin, kind, good-hearted fellows, produced a glass of brandy, purloined from their small stock reserved for medicinal

purposes, the result of which was that in a quarter of an hour I was myself again.

This unexpected meeting was so pleasant, that we agreed that as it was Saturday afternoon all should postpone trekking till next evening ; and as I was to be their guest to-night, they would be mine at an early hour on the morrow.

Before sunset my waggon arrived, so travel stained and worn that it looked a sad, sorry affair, when contrasted with their smart, painted, snow-white covered ones. Will their appearance be the same when, in a year hence, if no casualty has happened to their owners, they retrace their steps to civilization ? It is doubtful, indeed—more than doubtful.

As the ground on the edge of the valley was all occupied, my people had to take up an outside position, and, in consequence, I gave strict orders for an unusually large supply of firewood to be laid in ; the far end of the trek-toe to be made fast, and the oxen secured with short reims to their yokes.

The sun had not long been set when Mr. Curtin's man came to borrow my chairs, and announce that dinner was ready. We followed him over to his waggon, and just as the gloaming was quickly fading away into darkness, we sat down to our meal, with a small clear fire between us, as the evenings were getting cool. Our food

was excellent—it was a stew made out of kid, and thickened with rice and onions. It was our only dish, truly, but our appetites were not fastidious—we were hungry, and could eat so much of this homely fare, that we had no desire for entrée or dessert.

A few bushes extended from the woods to within ten or twelve yards of where I sat. To this my back was turned; while Mr. Curtin was seated on my left, Mr. Catenby on my right. At length our meal was finished, and the plates had been removed. Then the soother of all our troubles, the consoler in all our difficulties—the pipe—was produced, loaded, and brought into service. Our tin beakers were again replenished, for I had ransacked my supplies that I might add something at least better than water—one mass of animalculæ and filth—to the feast.

Our tongues became loosened; times like these, and associates thus unexpectedly met, are ever the cause of conversation becoming fluent, and a pleasant night being passed. Thus we were enjoying ourselves, when I heard—well, a low, heavy, suppressed breathing, and a rustling, as if some large body was forcing a passage through the bushes. My ears of late had been too well accustomed to such sounds not to know what they indicated, so, not to alarm the others, I quietly asked them to excuse my stepping over

the fire between them, as I wished to turn my face in the other direction. I did so, and put down my stool. Both my new friends looked at me with surprise, then one of them remarked, "You had some object in that; you did it in such a methodical manner." To this I agreed, and added, "There is a lion behind me, and if he meditates mischief, I would sooner be attacked in front than in the rear." "You must be mistaken, you are most assuredly deceived; it would never think of coming so near our fires." And at this moment a large white dog, belonging to Mr. Curtin—a cross between the greyhound and the mastiff—rushed from beneath the waggon where he had been sleeping, dashed into the bush and commenced to bay some animal that evidently had no intention of giving way, and which he was unable to attack.

We left our seats and retired to the waggon, and under its shelter smoked our pipes to the end; however, we had not got far in the enjoyment of the weed when the lion, finding himself discovered, got up, walked off a few paces, and then, placing his mouth to the ground, awoke the sleeping echoes that lurked around the neighbouring coppies.

Curtin was tired, and went to roost; Catenby came with me to my waggon, because it occupied the point of danger. Willingly my lads piled

more fuel on the fires, till the brilliant flames rose several feet from the ground. My new friend and self, with a gun each at hand, took our seats upon the waggon-box, and scarcely had we done so when the roaring recommenced, and was answered in several different directions.

My dogs were of no use, closer and closer they crouched in their sleeping places, while the white dog of Mr. Curtin was out baying the marauders, giving indication by his voice and vehemence of the whereabouts of the enemy. But my oxen were a sight to look at; one by one, when they had heard the dreaded sound, they rose from their previously recumbent position, and faced towards where they apprehended danger. They had learned by this time to place confidence in man, and that their safety depended upon being in his vicinity; so they stood, without an effort to break loose, with their small ears erect, and their eyes looking as if they would burst from their sockets.

At length day broke, and the disappointed carnivoræ retired to the east, indicating by an occasional growl or suppressed roar that the success of their night's work had not been satisfactory. The spoor in the morning was easily found, and the natives asserted there were no less than seven in the coterie.

A circumstance occurred during the loudest part of the serenade. I have seen the same take

place before, but it is sufficiently strange to mention. A Mashoona took a brand from the fire and walked into the woods directly towards the lions. When he had got close to them he waved his fire-stick about his head, and then made a long speech in a very highly-pitched voice.

Mr. Catenby, who is conversant with the language, translated it at the time. The words, as nearly as I can remember, were: "O mighty lord, why do you come and disturb my cattle, or have you become too old and lazy to hunt, or are you turned woman-hearted? Go your way, the quagga and hartebeest are yours, the koodoo and the buffalo they await you while you lose your time here; leave, I say, or we shall think you no better than the hyæna, whose associate you will become."

This man must have gone quite close to the lions, and yet he had no other protection than the glowing coal at the end of a stick not over an inch and a half in diameter.

"You will not hear a lion until you have crossed the Notawaney River," all the authorities in Zeerust said, although it was an undisputed fact that three had been seen close to Potschefstrom Road a week or two before, and another had been killed a month or two previously in the vicinity of Klerksdorp. On this occasion the prophets were correct; but it was one of those

chance circumstances that sometimes occur, and lead to the belief that persons occasionally have the gift of divination..

The fact is, that lions travel so much in the wet season, that if there is one within a hundred miles of you, you can never feel certain that he will not pay you a visit; they appear and disappear in the most mysterious manner, and generally in the most unexpected way. Thus you may pass through the most suitable-looking haunts for the lord of beasts, and yet not discover a sign that would indicate his presence; while, on the other hand, on the open bare velt, where there is scarcely enough shelter to hide a Namaqua partridge, up his highness will rise before you as if he had sprung out of the soil.

Of one thing, however, you may feel certain; you will not discover him very far from water, unless at the season when the sexes come together, and then their conduct seems governed by no rule. At other times the lion always drinks once in twenty-four hours, frequently twice, immediately before dark or just before day breaks; but, if he should chance to kill game during the day, and have made a hearty meal off it, before retiring to sleep he will go to water. As the lion is almost nocturnal in his habits, this does not frequently occur, except in such distant out-of-the-way places as are seldom intruded on by human beings. That

the lion loves not man is certain, and by daylight will always avoid him if possible, unless he be come upon unawares, or be wounded, in either of which cases he will make a stand, and in the latter assuredly show fight.

The afternoon that we approached the Notawaney the clouds appeared surcharged with rain ; towards sunset the whole face of the western horizon looked so dark and gloomy that one might well imagine that they intended to shut out the coming day.

I had had a long, wearisome, trying trek ; game had been abundant on both sides of the route, but, with the exception of shooting a few francolins and guinea-fowl, I had not had my gun in my hands. But for the thorns this might have been otherwise, for they were so numerous, so dense, that I could not bring myself to such an act of cruelty as to ride a horse through them. The wait-a-bit, the binder, and the *Mimosa horribilis*, or ivory needle, seemed here to revel and live in such close vicinity that they were evidently on the most friendly terms.

It was expected that the river would be reached by sunset ; but the road had been so heavy, and the heat so oppressive, that it now became obvious that we should be at least a couple of hours late.

As the Notawaney is not fordable immediately after heavy rains, and there was every indication

that such were about to fall, it was imperative that we should push on, and get across before the flood descended. It is a standing rule among African travellers always to cross a river that you come to in your route ; let what will happen after that is performed, you are then on the right side.

To what I have said about the lion here, I should add one notable exception—namely, that in the Matabele country, where wars have been carried on incessantly for nearly half a century, the king of the felidæ has become so bold, that he not only hunts by day, but will attack man without the slightest provocation. This is to be accounted for by the number of wounded and maimed men—unable to protect themselves—that have crawled off from the fight into the bush. This has even had an effect upon the hyænas ; for in the country of Lubengulo they are so bold that they have been known to attack people, and it is no uncommon occurrence to hear that children nine or ten years of age have been carried off by them in broad daylight.

Among the Mashoonas, Macalacas, and Matabeles, it is frequently to be observed by strangers that many of these people have fearful gashes on their face—a wound that looks as if the cheek had been torn off—and such in fact is the case. The unfortunate has been lying asleep on the

volt by his fire, when the cowardly skulker has stolen upon him, and with the rapidity of lightning, and a force that is irresistible, torn off the victim's cheek.

These depredations are to be attributed to the large spotted hyæna, a beast that sometimes attains the height of a small donkey.

But to resume my narrative. About half an hour before sunset it commenced to rain, and the wind fell almost to a dead calm. At the time I was accompanied by a young trader, whose waggon followed mine about one hundred yards in rear; behind it was all our loose stock—horses, spare oxen, and two or three cows; these were followed by several blacks, specially among whom was a man of mine, a Macalaca, who was returning to his far-distant home from the diamond-fields, where he had been to work in order to obtain the much-coveted musket, great coat, and blanket.

The care he took of the first-mentioned showed with what affection he regarded his treasure—and never for a moment did he permit his loved weapon to be out of his sight, I may almost say out of his hands. It mattered not how warm it was, or how much he suffered from want of water, or what scampering he had to do over the velt to keep the oxen and horses together, his musket was in his hands, although he might have placed

stream does not flow, but is in a succession of deep stagnant pools, some of which extend a couple of hundred yards in length.

The sun had been down quite half-an-hour when I reached the southern bank; the other waggon was close up, and all the loose cattle in their place.

Putting on the brake, down my belongings slid to the bottom; it was hazardous work, as the darkness had become very intense, so much so that I do not believe the driver could see more than an ox-length in front. When at the bottom, we halted for a few minutes. The driver yells, "Amaga!" but the waggon is stuck. Another effort, still it does not move, but Umganey and myself go to the driver's assistance, and through shouting and whipping force the cattle to lay against their yokes, and we slowly climb up the incline.

This incline resembled an artificial cutting, and was margined on both sides by a dense growth of trees, ever the case in the vicinity of water in South Africa. At the top of the bank I told the driver to stop for a few minutes, in order that I might assist my companion if he got into difficulties. Like myself he reached the bottom safely, but unfortunately there he became a fixture.

For nearly half-an-hour we could not release

him ; however, patience and perseverance, as in every instance, had their reward, and the exhausted oxen, grunting over the severity of their toil, at length hung to their work and hauled together ; the waggon again moved, slowly at first, soon more rapidly, till the summit was passed.

But during these vexatious delays, the cattle that were loose took advantage of the absence of their guard, and strayed up and down the margin of the river. Orders were issued to have them re-collected without delay, and we trecked slowly on to the next out-spanning place, to be followed up by them as soon as possible.

For quite two hundred yards of our course the trees almost interlocked over our heads, while their stems beneath were hid in the densest description of matted underbrush. With a feeling of relief we both got successfully through the woods, and again entered open velt, and we were congratulating ourselves that our work was over when the yell of several people, the report of a gun, and an attempted panic among the working cattle, informed us that something unusual had taken place. Of what it was we were not long kept in ignorance, for one of our people, breathless from fright and exertion, came up shouting *Taou !* (Bechuana, lion).

My friend and self rushed towards the scene of

action, with our guns ready for service ; but I had not gone many yards when Umganey stopped me, endeavouring, in the few broken words of English he could command, to prevent me going any farther.

“What does the fellow say ?” I asked my companion.

“That the lion can see in the dark, and if you go near him now, he will see to kill you, while you can’t see to shoot him.”

While Umganey’s interruption occurred, several voices from the vicinity of where the accident had happened called out, in Bechuana, that it was a *quay* (young cow), that had been killed. This was reassuring, for both had dreaded that the marauders had selected a horse, for, strange to say, they invariably choose that animal before all others for their prey.

My friend turned to me and said, “We had better listen to Umganey’s advice, as it is only a cow ; there is no use running any risks for it.” So we returned to the waggons, had large fires made, and planned our course of action for the morrow.

We could not help, however, being uneasy, for more than half our people were missing, and all the loose cattle and horses absent, they having doubtless in their alarm stampeded back.

A more uncomfortable night I have not often

passed. A disagreeable drizzling rain continued falling, and we dare not take shelter ; moreover, the dogs were kept in a constant state of alarm, giving utterance to their feelings of fear by incessant whines and suppressed growls ; while from the wood, on the margin of the river, the lions were evidently having a battle over their prey ; jackals and hyænas around them giving vent to their feelings by wailing because they were not participators in the feast.

About three in the morning I had been round the fires to urge the boys to keep them up, when suddenly the draft oxen, who were tied to their yokes — the far end of the treck-toe being fastened to a tree—made a desperate effort to break loose ; but fortunately they were all secured with new buffalo *reims*, which I had procured in Marico to be used on such occasions as the present.

At length day broke, and we started for the scene of action, both armed with double eight-bore guns. We were not long kept in doubt what had been the victim, for there lay a large portion of the hind-quarters of the old bay-elephant-horse ; but where were the lions ? We did our best to discover them, but the underbrush was so dense that we could not hope for success.

From several of the neighbouring trees our

absent people now descended. In them they had been perched all night; and, what between bruises, thorns, and wet, looked indeed the personification of misery. The tall Macalaca also presented himself: he also had found a hiding-place; and from him we learned that he had fired at one of the lions and was certain he had wounded it. Whether this was so or not, all agreed in the statement that the lions, of which they said there were seven, had only left the remains of the carcase when they heard us approach.

The missing cattle had now to be recovered; and we were far from feeling satisfied that we knew the extent of our losses. Taking the back trail, we spoorred them for two miles along the road; here they had branched off (horses and cattle) to the right, traversed about three miles of velt, and halted in the open plain. The quantity of blood on the trail we could not understand at the time, but when we overtook the runaways the mystery was at once explained. The Macalaca, in his anxiety to kill a lion, had either missed that animal and lodged his bullet in an ox, or else in the dark mistaken the ox for a lion. Whichever way it was, there lay the handsome black and white bullock, with every evidence that the hours of its life were numbered, so the edict went forth for it to be slaughtered.

Returning to the waggons an hour or two after-

wards, we found that in our absence the lions had come back and taken away the remaining portion of the horse. This looked so much like an act of bravado that we resolved to make another effort for the destruction of some of their number; but among our people none could be got venturesome enough to undertake the spooring. The promise of a cup of gunpowder ultimately induced the Macalaca to volunteer; and from the masterly manner in which he commenced his work it was easy to see that he was an old hunter.

Soon he led us across the thick jungle on to more open ground; this he traversed at a rapid pace till some loose rocks forming the margin of a *copje* were reached. For a few minutes he appeared at fault, when, looking to his left, with a grunt he pointed his finger, brought his gun down and cocked it. Looking in the direction indicated, a lioness, with the hip-bone of the horse between her fore legs, lay facing us. Her expression denoted that she was anything but pleased by the interruption. At the time she was seventy-five yards off—too far to make certain work; so we resolved to lessen the distance by one-half. While doing so, two lions that must have been behind the rocks got up, walked leisurely away, gradually increasing their speed till they disappeared.

Such conduct was evidently not going to be

pursued by her ladyship. With her eyes firmly fixed on us and her head flat upon the ground she watched our movements with an earnestness of expression that cannot be found in any other animal, her tail all the time moving gently to and fro.

My companion quietly said, *sotto voce*, "Don't fire until you see her ears twitch;" and scarcely had he said so than they were drawn back with a quick spasmodic motion. "Now's our time," he said; and a brace of bullets, one in the shoulder and another in the head, turned her over on her side, dead. Not a struggle occurred after the shots were fired, and so simultaneously were the triggers pressed that the two reports sounded as one.

On returning to the waggons we soon discovered what had made the oxen attempt to stampede and the dogs so uneasy during the night. Several lions—the boys said five—had walked repeatedly round our encampment at less than a hundred yards' distance. In spite of the drizzling rain there remained the spoor, a proof that the lads' assertions could not be controverted.

Mr. Mackenzie (the missionary at Bamanwatto) told me an amusing story in reference to an incident that lately occurred to Mr. Hepburn. He and Mr. Mackenzie were both trekking from Kuruman together, where they had been to attend the meeting of members of various religious

associations. Their cattle had been without water for a couple of days when they reached the Notawaney, the bed of which, to their grief, they found perfectly dry.

Water must, if possible, be obtained, so they separated, the one going up the water-course, the other down, in the hope of finding a pool. Mr. Hepburn unsuccessfully had progressed about two miles when he spied some Bushmen's huts; to them he directed his steps, in hope of learning where the desired *metsea* (Bechuano for water) could be obtained. On reaching these human habitations he could see no one, so stooping low down to enable him to pass the diminutive doorway, he attempted to enter the nearest building. When he had almost accomplished the performance, in fact, got half-way in, what was his surprise to observe, instead of human beings, a mature male and female lion sound asleep! Slowly and silently he withdrew, and as he was unarmed made a rapid retreat to the waggons.

It was an awkward position to be placed in, and one that required an unlimited amount of presence of mind.

Another excellent story was told me by a trader. The persons principally interested were some English gentlemen.

While on the velt, shooting antelope, they met another white hunter. As such meetings are

very rare, and, I may add, very enjoyable, an arrangement was made that the party of our countrymen should pay the hunters' camp a visit in the course of a day or two. However, days elapsed and they did not come, thus, their intended host got uneasy, and resolved to seek them out and learn what was the cause of their not keeping their promise. On arrival at their camping-place he found them outspanned in the centre of a most formidable kraal they had erected, but no oxen or horses within sight. On hailing his friends, and entering into conversation with them, he learned that a day or two previously the lions had driven all their cattle off, and that even now an old mannikin was watching them, thus preventing their going out, even in search of their beasts.

Says the hunter, "You would not let a confounded lion keep you prisoned up, surely?"

"But he's an enormous brute."

"He is, is he; and where can he be found?" inquired the visitor.

"Oh! behind that bush; there, that one about a hundred yards off. You cannot see him now, but he's there, and has been there since the cattle were driven off," was the answer.

The hunter simply exclaimed, "I'll soon make him quit," and walked out of the kraal straight up to the bush in question. Behind it was a

fine old lion asleep, but who got roused up by the intruder's approach, and before the poor beast could do his yawning, stretching, and taking the kinks out of his back, he was bowled over with a two-ounce bullet through the head.

The best hunter in South Africa, in his time, was the performer of this deed.

About half an hour before sunset, on another occasion, I reached Seruley Vley.—a pretty camping-ground as ever was looked at. The water covers about two acres, and on its bosom, on the far side, float innumerable water-lilies, on which ran about several surgeon birds, or jacanas, their long toes giving them such a width of support that they do so with the greatest facility. At the north end of the vley all the extremities of the drooping tree limbs have attached to them one of the strange but beautifully-constructed nests of the weaver-bird, placed there to avoid their enemies, the snakes.

On the eastern side of the vley is the camping or outspanning ground; beside it stands a very large tree of the species called by the Boers the *boomslang*. Here, underneath its shade, I took my seat, awaiting anxiously the arrival of what Umganey was preparing for dinner, when several wild ducks swept past as if desirous of alighting. I consequently got my gun and waited for a shot. Soon the opportunity offered, and I winged a

bird, which, fluttering, fell among the tall weeds. Certainly the light was failing, but I searched so carefully that I thought I ought to find it. I called some of the dogs to assist me, but they refused to come. At length in disgust I gave the matter up.

"Bass, dinner," had just sounded in my ears, when the distant crack of a whip was heard. "Another waggon, Bass, soon here," continued Umganey ; and, true enough, another waggon arrived.

Its owner, a German, came and accosted me. His name was Greet, and he was on his way to Bulwio, in Matabele Land. There is little standing on ceremony in this country, so he consented to become my guest. Dinner, therefore, was deferred until his cattle and horses were made snug for the night.

Soon the bullocks drank, and afterwards were being mobbed, previously to tying up, their owner and myself assisting, when the whole lot stampeded, knocked me down, and very nearly did the same to my companion. As soon as I could pick myself up I ran for my gun, for I knew that tired cattle would not act so unless there was some wild animal in their vicinity ; but I saw nothing. After a great deal of trouble the scared beasts were secured and tied to their yokes, and we passed a quiet and agreeable night.

Next morning, at daybreak, we were both up and ready to start, when my guide pointed out on the road the spoor of an immense lion. The presence of this beast was the cause, doubtless, why the dogs would not help me to find the wild duck, and the reason of the cattle stampeding.

When water becomes scarce in the thirsty plains of South Africa, the whole of the wild animals that inhabit them congregate around any pool that may be left, for with very few exceptions all have to drink once in twenty-four hours. The lions, which follow the game, thus are led to these drinking-places not only to assuage their thirst, but to satisfy their hunger.

To watch one of these pools at night, as I did in the northern Massara country, is a grand sight, and one never to be forgotten. The naturalist and the sportsman can here see sights which will astonish them, and cause them to wonder at the wonderful instincts possessed by the animal kingdom. That the Creator has ordered all things well, we know; but the minute details to which they have been reduced is seldom noticed, except by those who live not the life of the busy trading-world—such as wander into those portions of the earth but seldom disturbed by the presence of man.

At such watering-places the small antelopes invariably drink first, the larger later on, and with

them the zebras and buffaloes. After these come the giraffes, closely followed by the rhinoceros, and next the elephant, who never attempts to hide his approach—conscious of his strength—but trumpets forth a warning to all whom it may concern that he is about to satisfy his thirst. The only animal that does not give place to the elephant is the rhinoceros; obstinate, headstrong, and piglike, he may not court danger, but assuredly he does not avoid it. The elephant may drink by his side, but must not interfere with him, for he is quick to resent an insult, and I am assured that when one of these battles takes place the rhinoceros is invariably the victor. The elephant is large, of gigantic power, but the other is far more active, while the formidable horn that terminates his nose is a dreadful weapon when used with the force that he has the power to apply to it. I have been told on trustworthy authority that a rhinoceros, in one of those blind fits of fury to which they are so subject, attacked a large waggon, inserted his horn between the spokes of the wheel, and instantly overturned it, scattering the contents far and wide, and afterwards injuring the vehicle to such an extent as to render it useless.

The lion is not tied to time in drinking. After it feeds it comes to water, but it never would dare to interfere with the rhinoceros or elephant.

Where the buffalo exists it is frequently the prey of the lion; antelope and chiefly the zebra are, however, its principal food.

A strange circumstance connected with the lion is, that it is almost impossible to tell where he is when you hear his voice. When roaring loudly he places his head to the ground, gradually raising it as he diminishes the power of his voice. Although I cannot say that I recognize anything terrible in the lion's voice, many other people do, and I have been in the company of persons who became completely demoralized while it lasted. That this animal's voice makes the earth vibrate is a fact.

The peculiarity I have alluded to, of it being difficult to distinguish where the king of beasts is by his voice, is said to be utilized in this way: their prey hear it, and, to avoid the destroyer, rush into his grasp.

A Bechuana hunter of great experience told me this in presence of many of his countrymen, and there are no closer observers living of the animal creation amid which they reside than these people.

Last year, when on the edge of the Kaloihari desert, I again interviewed the king of beasts. It was in this wise:—

Towards sundown I observed the spoor of many of the *Carnivora*.

These are always to be noted where any tract of land becomes less frequented by the human family. To avoid a tedious *détour* we turned to the westward from the road, which then was almost due north. The tract we were now following had evidently been used by the natives, for, although little more than a path, it was clearly distinguishable. The sun was almost setting when my attendant called my attention to an animal standing on an adjacent knoll, and at first I found it difficult to define what it was, but at length recognized a grand old lion of the black mane species.

His curiosity seemed to be as much excited as my own, and his manner indicated that he was undecided whetherto increase our mutual acquaintance, or to make a bolt of it.

I should have passed on and left him considering the matter, but that my horses "got his wind," and became most unmanageable, the led-horse doing all in his power to get loose.

However, the mount my servant rode was quite equal to the occasion, and quietly took the lead.

This beast I purchased in Kania, and he was guaranteed both a good hunter and a *saulted* horse. My knowledge of him had already taught me that he was certainly the former, for a steadier old garron never looked through a bridle. He

was destitute of speed, but wholly unconscious of fear, and I fancy could have gone from morning until night for weeks in succession without turning a hair, if not pushed beyond his gait.

His example was beneficial, for the mount I bestrode and my led-horse, although still a bit restive, immediately followed him.

When nearly abreast of the king of beasts, standing as he was in his original position, I drew my revolver and fired a shot over his back, with an elevation sufficient to ensure its not touching him. This hint had precisely the desired effect, for he went away "loaping" over the prairie as if he had had a pack of foxhounds at his tail.

It was near where I have hunted a great deal the following scene took place, alike interesting to the sportsman and naturalist:—

"Oswell and I were riding this afternoon along the banks of the Limpopo, when a water-buck started in front of us. I dismounted, and was following it through the jungle, when three buffaloes got up, and, after going a little distance, stood still, and the nearest bull turned round and looked at me. A ball from the two-ouncer crashed into his shoulder, and they all three made off. Oswell and I followed as soon as I had reloaded, and when we were in sight of the buffalo, and gaining on him at every stride, three

lions leaped on the unfortunate brute. He bel-
lowed most lustily as he kept up a kind of run-
ning fight; but he was of course soon over-
powered and pulled down. We had a fine view of
the struggle, and saw the lions on their hind legs
tearing away with teeth and claws in most fero-
cious style. We crept up within thirty yards,
and, kneeling down, blazed away at the lions.
My rifle was a single-barrel, and I had no spare
gun. One lion fell dead almost on the buffalo;
he had merely time to turn towards us, seize a
bush with his teeth, and drop dead with the
stick in his jaws. The second made off imme-
diately, and the third raised his head, coolly
looked round for a moment, then went on tearing
and biting at the carcass as hard as ever. We
retired a short distance to load, then again
advanced and fired. The lion made off, but a
ball that he received ought to have stopped him,
as it went clean through his shoulder-blade. He
was followed up and killed, after having charged
several times. Both lions were males."—FRANK
VARDON.

The above I extract from a letter to the late
and much-lamented Doctor Livingstone, the
celebrated African explorer.



THE TIGER AND HIS VICTIM.

TIGERS.

My opportunities of enjoying the sport of tiger shooting have been so limited, that, unfortunately, I have no personal experiences of interest to narrate, so quote an adventure of Colonel Pollock's, of the Madras Army :

“ All this morning we were busy packing our traps on elephants, preparatory to moving camp. After breakfast we got on our ponies and started for Myetchin, where we arrived in the course of the afternoon. Had I been looking out as I ought to have been doing, I might have got capital shots at a thamine (deer) ; but I was mooning along, and did not see some three or four deer which were staring me in the face, till they were going away full pelt. Not wishing to disturb the country I did not fire. About 3 p.m. Maddon and Osmer went out stalking, whilst Boyle and I stayed at home. It was about 5 p.m., and we were going to bathe ; I had on nothing but a shirt and long drawers, and was destitute of shoes or socks. Boyle had not undressed. A mahout, in a great

state of excitement, came up on a small elephant, and said that he and the other mahouts had just seen, marked down, and surrounded a tiger close by; indeed, we could see the other elephants grouped about in a circle. I must own I did not believe there was a tiger there, but as the distance was nothing—short of half a mile—I proposed to Boyle we should get on the elephant and go there; so, taking a couple of rifles each, just as we were we jumped up, and in a few minutes' time were at the scene of action. No sooner had we got there than I twigged the tigress creeping away in front of us; but as soon as she found herself discovered she charged us at once. I don't think she meant more than to frighten us away, and this she most effectually did, as every hâthee bolted, but not before Boyle and I had taken two snap-shots at her. As soon as the elephants could be stopped, I got on to the top of the charrah on my own elephant, who was loaded with his night's food of long grass, nicely packed in a huge heap on his back. Being thus elevated, I flattered myself I could see better than if on an ordinary guddi, and I never thought of sending for my howdah. We formed line, but the elephants were very unsteady, often refusing to advance, trumpeting, shuffling their feet along the ground, knocking their trunks on the hard earth till the noise could be heard half a mile off; in fact, showing all the

signs of being in a perfect stew. The tigress had shown good judgment in her tactics, as she had made our shooting her now a most difficult task. However, we got on the best way we could, and again started her. No sooner was her rush heard, as she ran parallel past our line, than every hâthee except mine formed a close phalanx and ran away, taking with them Boyle. My elephant, though he would not bolt, was as unsteady as he could be. The tigress had taken up her position in a small patch of high grass, and towards this I made my mahout push the reluctant beast. By the time I got within fifty yards of it, Boyle had managed to get the elephants back. I could see the grass moving from the motion of the tigress's tail, as she swayed it to and fro in her lair. The Burman shikaree called out to me to fire into the grass. I did so, and the movement in the grass ceased. I thought I had made a lucky shot, and that our enemy was dead, and told the mahout to push in the elephant. He had not gone ten yards, which he did protesting by noises and sundry shakings most loudly against the movement, than out the tigress rushed like a shot from a catapult, and seized him by the right leg, or rather foot. I fired into her as she charged, but failed to stop her speed, even for one second. The elephant threw her by a jerk of the leg a good ten feet off, and as she fell on her back both Boyle

and I fired into her. Poor Boyle's elephant would not stand for a second, and how he managed to hit her, as he did this time, I don't know; but he certainly shot her through the stomach, and I higher up. She crawled into a patch of long grass as soon as she picked herself up. By this time I was getting savage. Being on the top of a heap of grass on the elephant's back I found my seat insecure, and having two rifles, it was not easy to take care of them both. I had no shikaree with me. The other elephants were fifty yards away, and coming back to us slowly. I made the mahout push my animal right for the patch into which the tigress had gone. No sooner had the elephant's head entered this than the tigress sprang clean off the ground, between his tusks, which were a very fine pair, and, clinging to the trunk and forehead with her claws, she set to work to maul him about the jaw. Those who are familiar with elephants will easily realize the row mine kicked up at this mark of affection on the tigress's part. He suddenly threw himself on his knees and began driving his long tusks into the soft ground, imagining that he was pounding the tigress, whereas she was quite safe and was punishing him dreadfully. I had hit the tigress hard as she sprang up, but in the scrimmage which ensued the charrah and I were sent flying, and I fell on the broad of my back,

with my face about four feet from the tigress's rump. I had half-cocked my remaining gun as I was falling, and full-cocked it as soon as I reached the ground. Poor Boyle thought I was killed, and was thrashing his mahout to induce him to come to my aid, but not one of the elephants with him would move, except away from the tigress. When I picked myself up, I found in front of me an infuriated elephant, a tigress well fastened to his head, and nothing of her visible but the tail and rump. I thought discretion the better part of valour, though I was savage enough to have done anything at the time. I began to back out, having the gun ready for instant use, but my position was not a nice one. I had no shoes or socks on even; the ground was hard and lumpy, and covered with the sharp stems of the elephant-grass which had been burnt but lately, and, as the surface was covered with thorny creepers, every four or five paces I took backwards I was thrown down, and every time I fell Boyle thought the tigress was upon me. However, after about as nasty a hundred yards' walk as ever I had in my life, I got back to where the elephants were congregated, and fortunately one which had been in camp was coming towards us. I immediately got on it and hurried back. This elephant was a horrible coward, but it had not been in the row, so he went along pretty fast

towards where my elephant and the tigress were still fighting ; but before we could reach the spot my hâthee had shaken himself clear of the tigress, and run towards us, with the mahout holding on to its hind quarters instead of being as usual on the neck. The charrah was all on one side, and the ropes had cut into the elephant's back a good two inches, incapacitating him for work or shikar for six months. The only thing the mahout called out to me as he passed was that the tiger had bitten him, nothing more. I, of course, pushed on to the front as hard as I could, as I was determined to kill the beast if possible. No sooner had I got within a respectable distance of her than, without waiting to be shot at, out she charged. I hit her, but only stopped her for a second ; the elephant turned round to bolt, but she was much too quick for him, and seized him upon the inside of the thigh, and there held on. Whilst the elephant was bolting, and she hanging on, swinging to and fro under his belly, I tried, by using my gun as a pistol, to shoot her through the head ; but owing to the rapid motion and unsteadiness of the elephant I missed her. I had also to hold on to the pad-ropes with one hand. To make a long story short, this beast of a tigress mauled my elephant—the second I was on—eight times, receiving a ball each time. We were just as savage as she was, but she had the

advantage of us in the approaching darkness, and at last, when no amount of thrashing would induce the mahout or elephant to advance one inch towards her, she never attempted to bolt, but sat in a patch of long grass till I got within twenty yards of her, and then she would rush out, roaring fearfully ; and, as it was all but dark, we had to leave her and go home. The poor mahout—my first one—was fearfully mauled ; his foot was crunched to pieces, and yet he said nothing, but that the tigress was a *banchoot*, and he hoped the sahib would kill it next day. Fortunately, we had Dr. Madden with us, about as skilful a medical man and as jolly a fellow as one would wish to meet with, and he took out all the broken bones and bandaged up the foot as well as he could. I sent off to Tongho for medicines that same night, and got them in thirty-six hours, and, thanks to Madden's skill and kindness, the mahout recovered ; but his foot was never altogether sound, and after healing for a month a new sore would break out again, and more small bits of bone come away. The elephant was worse cut by the charrah-ropes than by the tigress, though she had bitten him badly enough. I did not use him for six months. He was a plucky beast, would never run, but he was too unsteady to allow one to make correct shooting off his back. I may here say that

though he had suffered the worst, he was the only one out of the eight elephants which would go up to the tigress, for we found her dead early the next morning. He walked up to her, and when told to hit her with his trunk did so, whilst the rest of the elephants, some of them immense tuskers, would not go near her. We found her dead and quite offensive early in the morning. Her last charge had been feeble, and she evidently was unable to return to her lair after it, as she lay dead in the open on her back. I think she had eleven bullets in her, any one of which ought to have crippled her. She measured only nine feet as she lay dead. Her tail was very short. The Burmese called her a royal tiger, and said that the *zat-wallas* always prove more savage than the tigers with longer tails. Certainly nothing could have been more savage and plucky than she was. I found my feet rather cut by the stumps of the elephant-grass, and I made a vow to shoot tigers only out of a howdah in future, and not to trust to pads or charrah."

The following thrilling and most graphic description of the death of a notorious man-eater, from the graceful pen of G. P. Sanderson, Esq., I feel convinced must interest all, so presume to append it:—

"Tiger-shooting on foot is very generally con-

demned, but, as in most matters of choice, there is something to be said for, as well as against, it. It is never followed systematically by any man, but circumstances occasionally arise when it must be resorted to, or sport be sacrificed. At this point some men abandon their quarry, some stick to it. Those without experience of their game do well to pause; but one who knows the beast he has to deal with may kill many dangerous animals on foot without accident or even serious adventure. Almost every accident that occurs is directly traceable to ignorance or carelessness. The sportsman is a tyro and over-venturesome; or due precautions are not observed when a wounded beast is on foot, and some one, moving about where he does not think the animal can possibly be, is seized.

“Tiger-shooting on foot can never, of course, be safe sport; but a sportsman is not supposed to look for absolute safety on all occasions, any more than does a soldier. Risks must be run, but, if properly conducted, dangerous game-shooting on foot is not the mad amusement usually supposed. Speaking for myself, I have been fortunate enough to kill several tigers and panthers, and a large number of bears and other formidable beasts, on foot, so I will venture to state what I think are the chief precautions to be observed.

“It makes all the difference in the world whether

the animal to be attacked is wounded or not. The sportsman occasionally comes upon a tiger when after other game, or one is driven from a cover without being much bullied. There is no danger to speak of in firing first shots at a hundred such beasts. But if a tiger has been much harassed and irritated, and imagines himself unable to escape—or wounded, and is followed up whilst pain and exhaustion have forced him to stop—he proves a very different beast to the retiring animal he ordinarily is, though he is always an abject coward if firmly faced. It is true, in shooting with elephants, tigers frequently get on board some of them; but the tiger fears man more than any other being, and, though he will charge pluckily enough to all appearances, he always shirks the last ten feet if boldly received. In netting tigers I have seen this so constantly that I am quite sure a few determined men, keeping together, are quite safe from any tiger in open ground.

“Whether a tiger should be attacked on foot or left alone depends greatly on the nature of the jungle in which he is found. In the grass plains and thick undergrowth of such parts of Bengal as I have seen, tigers can only be shot from the elevation of elephants’ backs; but in many parts of Southern India the jungle is clear inside, and the ground is broken, so that rocks and ravines may afford advantageous positions. The tiger

can also be shot even without such aids when he can be seen at some distance.

“None but the utterly ignorant would think of following a wounded tiger into long grass or close cover, where it has every advantage, and the sportsman may be seized before he has time to use his rifle. As well might one follow it on a dark night. In such cover the tiger rarely makes any demonstration from a distance, seeking to avoid observation, but when almost stumbled upon he attacks like lightning. In doing this, he is seldom seeking to make a reprisal, and only acts in self-defence when he thinks himself discovered.

“One of the most powerful elements in a tiger’s attack is his voice, if the attack be commenced very near. The startling coughing roar is almost paralyzing to the coolest in such cases. But if the tiger has to come on from any distance he rarely does more than grunt, and the sportsman’s attention is concentrated on the beast himself, and his demonstrations pass unnoticed. The power of the tiger’s voice at close quarters may be understood by any one who has an opportunity of seeing a newly-caged tiger. It is almost impossible to watch a charge against the bars, if standing within a yard or so of them, without flinching; but if seen at twenty yards’ distance it is nothing.

"If a moment's time be given for preparation, a tiger's charge loses much of its power. In following any dangerous game the excitement felt when the beast is known to be near but not visible amounts to positive nervousness. A quail rising at his feet startles the man who, the next moment, faces an elephant or tiger with *sang froid*. As soon as the game is seen nervousness gives place to the most perfect coolness, and if a tiger's charge can be anticipated it loses most of its danger.

"I never myself hesitate to follow wounded animals on foot if the ground be favourable. In such cases the chief precautions to be observed are: to trust no place as not holding the tiger till it has been ascertained not to do so; never carelessly to approach thick cover from which a beast may make a sudden attack; and, if possible, to have men who will all stand firm. Under no temptation should the sportsman's last shot be fired at a retreating beast.

"I will now recall, with the aid of my hunting-journal, some scenes in tiger shooting, and will endeavour to select occurrences illustrative of the nature and peculiarities of the animal. Amongst them I will relate one or two incidents in tiger-shooting on foot, to show how I consider the sport may be managed when occasion demands.

"When I pitched camp at Morlay, in Septem-

ber, 1873, to commence the elephant kheddahs, the country-side was in a state of considerable alarm from the attacks of a man-eating tigress. This tigress's fits of man-eating seemed to be intermittent, as, after killing three or four persons some months before, she had not been heard of till about the time of my arrival at Morlay, when she killed two boys attending goats. I anticipated some trouble from her in our kheddah work, as it would be unsafe for one or two men to go alone through the jungles; but whether it was from the disturbance caused by seven or eight hundred work-people, or other reasons, we heard nothing of her for some time.

"On November 30th, when the work-people had dispersed, news was brought in that a man, returning to the village of Mágwully (about six miles from Morlay) with cattle, had been carried off the evening before. From an account of the place where the mishap had occurred, I knew it was useless to look for the tigress after the lapse of eighteen hours, as she would have retired to impracticable jungle. I urged the people to bring news of further losses at the earliest possible moment.

"On December 19, another man was carried off close to the village of Iyenpoor, five miles from Morlay, but I did not hear of this until two days afterwards.

“On Christmas Day I thought I would look up the jungles in the Iyenpoor direction, so took an elephant and some trackers in hopes of learning something of the tigress’s habits. The unfortunate man’s wife, with her three small children, were brought to me as I entered the village. The woman, with the strange apathy of a Hindoo, related what she knew of her husband’s death without a tear. I gave her some money, as she would have to expend a small sum, in accordance with caste usage, to rid her of the devil, by which she was supposed to be attended on account of her husband’s having been killed by a tiger, before she would be admitted into her caste’s villages ; and then, accompanied by the headman and others, went to the scene of the late disaster. A solitary tamarind-tree grew on some rocks close to the village ; there was no jungle within three hundred yards, only a few bushes in the crevices of the rocks ; close by was the broad cattle-track into the village. The unfortunate man had been following the cattle home in the evening, and must have stopped to knock down some tamarinds with his stick, which, with his black blanket and a skin skull-cap, still lay where he was seized. The tigress had been hidden in the rocks, and in one bound seized him, dragged him to the edge of a small plateau of rock, from which she jumped down

into a field below and there killed him. The place was still marked by a pool of dried blood. She had then dragged her victim half a mile to a spot where we still found his leg-bones.

"After walking about for two hours with the trackers in the hopes of seeing recent marks of the tigress, but without success, the village cattle were sent for and herded into the jungles in the hope of attracting her if near. The poor beasts were, however, so frightened by the constant attacks of tigers, that we could scarcely get them to face the jungle, and a partridge rising suddenly was too much for their nerves, and sent them, tails up, to the village before they had been out half an hour. After some time they were got back. About 1 P.M., as they were feeding near a cover in a hollow encircled on three sides by low hills covered with bamboo, and a very pretty spot for a tiger, a wild scaring took place as a large tiger rushed amongst the foremost of them. Strange to say, they all escaped, two only being slightly wounded; a few plucky buffaloes were in advance, and interfered considerably with the tiger's attack, as these animals never hesitate to do.

"Up to this time I had been walking, rifle in hand, amongst the cattle, but the heat was considerable, and at this unlucky moment I was some little distance behind getting a drink, or I might

have had a shot. As the herdsmen were not certain that the tiger had not secured something in his rush, we went in force to look through the cover. We only found foot-prints, however, and knew they were not those of the man-eater but of a large male who was a well-known cattle-killer about the place. We shortly heard a spotted deer bark over the saddle of the hill to our left; the tiger had moved off in that direction upon his discomfiture. We saw nothing more of him that day, or of the man-eater, and I returned to camp by moonlight. It was so cold that I was glad of an overcoat. A good camp Christmas dinner was awaiting me; and, had I only been lucky enough to bag the man-eater, I should have been able to enter this among my red-letter days.

“After this nothing was heard of the tigress for a week, when the trackers and I were going to look after some wild elephants and at the ford in the river below the Koombappan temple found a tiger’s pugs that were immediately pronounced to be hers. I sent back two men on my riding-elephant to warn the people of Morlay that the tigress was in our jungles, as her usual hunting-grounds were to the east of the river and the people on our side were liable to be off their guard. We tried to follow her, but she had crossed open dry country, in which tracking was impossible, so we had to give her up. During the day I made

arrangements for hunting her systematically next day should she still be in our jungles.

“Whilst at dinner that evening, I heard voices and saw torches hurriedly approaching my tent, and could distinguish the words ‘*naic*’ and ‘*nurri*’ (‘dog’ and ‘jackal’) pronounced excitedly. The Canarese people frequently speak of a tiger by these names, partly in assumed contempt, partly from superstitious fear. The word ‘*hooli*’ (tiger) is not often used amongst jungle-men, in the same way that, from dread, natives usually refer to cholera by the general terms of *rōga* or *jārdya* (sickness). The people were from Hurdenhully, a village a mile and a half away, and had come to tell me that their cattle had galloped back in confusion into the village at dusk, without their herdsman. Only one man had been with them that day, as there was some festival in the village. We suspected he had fallen a victim to the tigress, but it was useless to attempt a search that night. The cattle had been two or three miles into the jungles, and we had no indications where to look for the unfortunate herdsman, who was, moreover, probably now half devoured. So ordering some rice for the men, I sent them to Morlay to tell the trackers, and to sleep there and return with them in the morning.

“At dawn we started on the back-trail of the cattle from Hurdenhully till we found the point

where they had begun to gallop, just below the embankment of a small channel drawn from the river near Atticulpoor, and supplying the Hurdenhully tank with water. The ground was hard and much trodden by cattle, and we looked for some time for the tigress's tracks in vain, till the distant caw of a crow attracted us to a place where we found the man's remains; only the soles of his feet, the palms of his hands, his head, and a few bones were left. We lost no time in taking up the tigress's track, and used every endeavour to run her down, as we had over a hundred men ready at camp to beat her out could we but mark her into some practicable cover; but though she had eaten so much she had recrossed the river as usual, and had gone into the jungles towards the hills, where there was no chance of finding her.

"About a week after this, the priest of a small temple ten miles due west from Morlay, and in comparatively open country where a tiger had not been heard of for years, was jogging along on his riding bullock one morning, to sweep out and garnish the small jungle-temple in which he officiated, and to present to 'Yennay Hollay Koombappah' the offerings of the simple villagers whose faith was placed in that deity. Suddenly a tigress with her cub stepped into the path. The terrified bullock kicked off his rider and galloped back to the village, whilst the tigress—

for it was the dreaded Iyenpoor man-eater, far out of her ordinary haunts—seized the hapless *poojáree* (priest), and carried him off to the bed of a deep ravine near.

“Upon hearing next day of this, my men and I thought it must be some other tiger, as this fiend had managed with such cunning that we did not then know that she had a cub; and it was not till we found this out subsequently that we traced this death to her also. Up to this time she must have left her cub in the thick jungles along the hills, making her rapid hunting forays alone, as the cub had never been with her before; and this accounted for her invariably crossing the river and making for the hills after a raid. The absence of the tigress from the vicinity of Morlay during September and October was probably caused partly by her keeping out of the way when this cub was very young.

“The next death was of a horrible description. Several villagers of Ramasamoodrum were grazing their cattle in a swampy hollow in the jungle near the temple, when the tigress pounced upon one man who was separated from the others. She in some way missed her aim at his throat, seized the shoulder, and then, either in jerking him, or by a blow, threw him up on to a thicket several feet from the ground. Here the wounded and bleeding wretch was caught by thorny

creepers ; whilst the tigress, as generally happens when any *contretemps* takes place, relinquished the attack and made off. The other men and the cattle had fled at the first alarm. The village was some distance away, and there was not time before nightfall for a party to search for the man, whose being still alive was not known. Next morning the lacerated wretch was found. In his mangled state he had been unable to release himself ; he was moaning and hanging almost head downwards amongst the creepers ; and he died soon after he was taken down.

“Before long the tigress visited my camp, but fortunately without doing any mischief. Close to my tent (my bungalow was not built then) was a large banyan-tree : every night a fire was kindled near it, and here I sat and discussed plans for work or sport with my men. One morning when the trackers came to wake me early, they found the man-eater’s tracks leading down a path close to the banyan-tree in question. As we thought she might still be on our side of the river, I accompanied the men to examine its vicinity, and to ascertain if she had recrossed it towards the hills ; if not, we intended to hunt the different covers on its banks during the day.

“Upon reaching the river we walked down the sandy bed overshadowed by drooping *hongay*

(the Indian beech, *Pongamid glabid*) trees. The scene at early morning was very pleasant. Gaudy kingfishers fluttered and poised over the pools and shallow runs of clear water into which the river—a considerable stream in the rains—had now shrunk. At the head we came upon a troop of lungoor monkeys (*Presbytis preamus*) feeding upon some fallen fruit; these ran nimbly across the sand to the sanctuary of the large trees when we appeared. In one stretch a spotted stag and several graceful hinds were drinking at the cool stream, perchance admiring their shapely forms in Nature's mirror; but for the nonce they passed unheeded. The soothing cooing of doves, the scream of the toneau, the cheery and game cry of the jungle-cock (*Gallus sonneratii*), perched aloft, whilst his ladies ruffled themselves in the sand below, combined to make one of those tranquil phases of beauty in Nature which are such a contrast to the wildness and grandeur of other scenes.

“The trackers moved quickly and silently along. We passed two or three pugs, but these elicited no notice, except one into which Dod Sedda drove the butt-end of his spear without a word; this was the night's track of the tigress to our side of the river. We had nearly got to the temple, below which it was not likely she would have crossed, and were in hopes of not

finding her out-going trail, when a single track across an unblemished stretch of sand caused an exclamation of disappointment, and one glance showed it to be the unmistakable small oval pug of the man-eater. We felt our chances of finding her that day were very small, but there was nothing like trying; so sending for an elephant to come to the temple and there await my return, we cast ahead towards the hills, and again hit off the trail. After several hours' work, finding tracks now and then in the sandy beds of ravines, but leading to a country where the cover was continuous, we were obliged to give it up as useless, as we could neither keep the trail nor have done anything towards driving such extensive cover had we even found where the tigress lay hidden. We were forced reluctantly to return, consoling ourselves with the hope of finding her in more favourable country soon, and vowing to leave no stone unturned until we had bagged her. It had become quite a point of honour with the trackers; we had never been played such successful tricks before by any animal, and they said the tigress was 'throwing dirt into their mouths.'

"We got back to the temple late in the afternoon; here I found the elephant and several of my people, and a man with a note from Captain C., of the Revenue Survey, who was in camp a

few miles from Morlay. I started the messenger back with a reply, and though we were pretty certain the man-eater was miles away, it was a nervous job for him to get through the jungle till he reached open country on the far side. He left us, already casting furtive glances around him, to the great amusement of my men (who had not the job to do themselves). Before he had got far, one of them, who was a bit of a humorist, called him back. The man came, when the wag, assuming a concerned air, said: 'You know, *keep a good look out a-head of you*—never mind the *rear*; if a tiger seizes a man from behind, what could any of us do? but, you know, *you can see her if she is coming for you from the front*, and you might try and run for it. Good-bye! Koombappah be with you! *Don't delay*; it's rather late as it is!' The poor villager grinned painfully at the joke, which the rest enjoyed immensely; but I saw he was in such a fright, and reflected that, with the uncertainty of her class, the tigress might as likely be near as far away, that I sent half-a-dozen men (the joker amongst them) to see him safely into the cultivated country on the other side.

"Shortly after this, work took me to Goondulpet, twenty-five miles from Morlay, on the Neilgherry road, and I returned on the 24th of January, 1874. As I rode into camp about

midday, the trackers were waiting for me, and informed me that they had heard the 'death-cry' raised at a small village called Bussavanpoor, below the Ramasamoodrum lake, and some two miles from Morlay, that morning; and that upon inquiry they found that a woman had been carried off by a man-eater out of the village during the night, but that they had not followed the tracks, as I was not with them. Bussavanpoor was a small hamlet, situated in the middle of open rice-fields, then bare, as the crop had been cut. There was no jungle to cover the man-eater's advance, and the tiger had never hitherto been heard of near the village. This attack was therefore the more unlooked-for and terrifying to the villagers.

"Immediately breakfast was over and an elephant ready, I started and soon reached Bussavanpoor. The attack had been most daring. At one end of the single street of the village stood a shady tree, round the base of which a raised terrace of stones and earth had been built as a public seat; within ten yards of this tree the houses began. From the marks we saw that the tigress had crouched upon this raised terrace, from which she commanded a view of the street. The nearest house on one side was occupied by an old woman, the one opposite by her married daughter. The old woman, it appeared, some-

times slept in her own house, sometimes at her daughter's. The night before she had been going to her daughter's, and as she crossed the street, only a few feet wide, the tigress, with one silent bound, seized and carried her off. No one heard any noise, and the poor old creature was not missed till morning.

"When I arrived, the son-in-law came forward, and, with the other villagers, gave an account of the mishap. The son-in-law's grief was really painful to witness; and when he told me how all his efforts to find any trace of his mother-in-law had been unsuccessful, he gave way to the most poignant outbursts. Now, knowing pretty well how little store is placed upon an old woman in India, I could not but regard this display of feeling by the fat young son-in-law as rather strange. A mother-in-law is not usually so highly esteemed (amongst natives) that her loss is deemed an irreparable calamity; and when I further noted that the afflicted youth could only give a shaky account of his exertions in looking for the body, I thought something was wrong, and had him taken along with us.

"The tigress had gone towards the river; and though cattle and people had been over the fields, and it was now afternoon, the sun hot, and a strong wind blowing clouds of dust about, the trackers carried on the trail very cleverly, and

pointed out that several footmarks had followed it before us, for which the prostrated son-in-law found some difficulty in accounting. After passing through a field of standing rice, in which the broad trail was very distinct, and where in the soft mud we got a fair impression of the tigress's pug, and through some bushes, where strips of a woman's blue cotton cloth were hanging, we came to a cocoa-nut garden near the river, and here, amongst some aloe bushes, we missed the drag. There was a place which looked as if the tigress had laid down, probably to eat, as there were marks of blood; but there were no remains, and the trail continued across the river, whither we followed.

"The trackers soon thought something was amiss, as no trace of the body being dragged could be found. One of them remarked that the tigress would hardly eat the whole at once; whilst, had she carried off the remainder in her jaws, she must have laid it down at the pool in the sandy bed where she had drunk. There was no trace of her having done this. We returned to the aloe bushes. After examining these for some time, one of the men looked into a thicket, and with an exclamation turned upon the son-in-law, and giving him a sound box on the ear, asked him, 'What he meant by it?'

" 'It,' was that the villagers had followed the

track with horns and tom-toms (as we subsequently learned) in the morning, and had burnt the remains to avoid police inquiry, the dejected son-in-law acting as chief mourner. The ashes of the fire which the tracker now pointed to inside the thicket, sufficiently explained the affair.

“The woman was of good caste. Had her death been reported, the remains would have been handled by out-castes, and have formed the subject of a sort of inquest by the police at Chámráj Nuggar ; to avoid this, the relatives had burnt the remainder of the body as soon as found. What could be done when the foolish villagers either brought us news too late or acted in this way ? We sent the now truly smitten son-in-law back to the village, bewailing his mother-in-law more sincerely, probably, than before ; and finding that the tigress had gone east, we returned to Morlay, it being useless to follow her in that direction.

“This death caused great consternation ; the villagers concluded that they would not now be safe in their houses at night, and some of the outlying hamlets would have been temporarily abandoned had the tigress lived much longer. But this was to be her last victim : though our chances of killing her seemed still as remote as ever, a few more hours were to end her bloody career.

“Next day, the 15th of January, I determined upon a more organized plan of hunting her. I arranged that Bommay Gouda and three trackers should go to Iyenpoor, at one end of her usual beat, whilst I remained at Morlay. In case of any one being killed near Iyenpoor the men were to let me know immediately ; and I supplied them with strychnine, and a gun charged with powder, as a safeguard in their jungle wanderings. The four men started early in the afternoon. About an hour afterwards one of them came running back, pouring with perspiration and covered with dust. I feared some accident had happened until he found breath to say that the party had met the tigress, and that she was then in Karraypoor Guddah, a small hill two miles from camp. This hill rose to a height of about 200 ft. out of a level cultivated plain ; on three sides it was almost bare granite, a few bushes and boulders being the only cover, and the country was open all round it. On the east face there was a little more cover, and the main jungle was distant 500 yards, but between it and the hill was open ground, so that the tigress was in an isolated position.

“I ordered a pad-elephant at once, whilst I thought over the best plan for hunting her. Such a chance as getting her into a detached hill could hardly be hoped for again, and the present situation offered a fine opportunity of extinguishing

her. The only plans were to drive her out, or to watch for her return to the carcase. The first I saw would not do, as all the Morlay men—the only ones amongst the villagers who would have been useful for this service, the others were too terrified—were at their fields, and time would be lost in collecting them; and though this might possibly have been effected, and the tigress have been driven out, as there was no doubt she would flee readily from a hunting-party, it would be impossible for one rifle to command the entire east side of the hill, at any point of which she might break. I therefore decided to watch for her return to the carcase, and hastily securing a bottle of water and some bread, and an overcoat in case of night-watching, I started.

“On the way the tracker told me how the party had met the tigress. They were going across open fields and saw an object moving over the bare ground, which they could not at first make out, but presently discovered to be a tiger on the far side of, and partly hidden by, a bullock, which it was half dragging, half carrying towards the hill. They immediately divined it to be the man-eater, and ran shouting towards her, obliging her to drop the bullock at the foot of the hill, up which she sullenly trotted. One tracker then hastened to camp; the others

remained to prevent her returning to the bullock before I arrived.

“I need here hardly say, except for the information of those who have had no experience of man-eating tigers, that they never refuse a bullock or other prey, if such offers, and that when opposed by man they give way at once. Their tactics in attacking man may be described in one word—surprise ; and if discovered in their attempt they generally abandon it. The most confirmed man-eaters never lose the innate fear with which all inferior animals regard human beings, and unless they can stalk and catch an unwary cow-herd or wood-cutter in their own fashion, they are not to be dreaded. When the tables are turned on them they flee as readily as other tigers.

“When we got near the hill we left the elephant and joined the trackers. The only cover near the carcase was a large rock, but the wind was wrong for watching from that quarter. About seventy yards away in the plain was one solitary bush, not sufficiently large to hide a man ; there was neither tree nor other cover within a couple of hundred yards. The situation certainly presented difficulties, and it was not easy to decide what to do. At last I hit upon a plan, and sent the men to bring leafy branches and creepers ; when these came we walked past the bush in a body, and the branches were thrown on to make it larger ; at

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the same time Bommay Gouda and I hid behind it, the others going on in full view from the hill. By this manœuvre, should the tigress be watching, she would not perceive that we had concealed ourselves.

“ We sat till evening. The sinking sun threw a strong light from behind us upon the granite hill, whilst in the distance the Billiga-runguns were bathed in purple light, deepening to blue in the gorges. The smoke of evening fires began to ascend from the small hamlet of Hebsoor away to our left, and a thick white cloud of dust moving slowly along the river bank towards the village marked the return homewards of the village herds. There would only be sufficient light to shoot at so long a range as seventy yards for half-an-hour or more, and I was beginning to fear the tigress might not return during daylight. The afternoon had been hot, and I had drunk all the water in the bottle, whilst patient Bommay Gouda, who, being of good caste, could not drink from my bottle, had sat with his bare back exposed to the grilling sun, watching without a movement. At this time of the year—January—the change in temperature in Mysore, and, in fact, the whole of India, between day and night, is very considerable, sometimes upwards of thirty degrees, and as the sun neared the horizon the evening quickly became chilly, but this disturbed Bommay Gouda no

more than the heat in his imperturbable watch. A couple of hares appeared from somewhere and gambolled in the space between us and the hill, and a peacock perched himself upon a rock, and with his spreading fan of purple and gold opened to the full turned slowly round and round, courting the admiration of a group of hens who pecked about, more intent upon their evening meal than the admiration of their vain swain. Satisfaction with himself, however, rendered him oblivious to the want of homage in his harem.

“ We had been whispering quietly, as we were out of earshot of the cover, and Bomma Gouda had just said, after a glance at the sinking sun, that it was the time, *par excellence*, for the tiger’s return to its prey, when a peahen, which had been hidden amongst boulders on the hillside to our right, rose with a startling clamour. This signal, as well known as unmistakable, made us glance through the leafy screen, and there we saw the man-eater, a handsome but small tigress, her colour doubly rich in the light of the sinking sun, walk from behind a rock across the side of the hill, here a bare sheet of blue granite, and come downwards towards the carcase. She halted now and again to look far out into the plain behind us. Was the beast, dreaded by thousands, hunted by us so long, and which we have never even seen before, the guilty midnight murderess, really

before us? Could nothing but some untoward failure now avert her fate?

“I followed her with my rifle so eagerly that Bommay Gouda whispered to me to let her get to the carcase before I fired. When she reached the bullock she stooped, and at the same instant I fired at her shoulder, broadside on, with my express. Bommay Gouda could contain himself no longer, and jumped up before I could stop him; I did so also, but could see no tigress! It was extraordinary, certainly; we looked up the hill-side, but she was not there. Was she really a devil as all believed, and had vanished in air? Just then up went a tail on the far side of the bullock in a convulsive quiver—she had fallen exactly behind the carcase. I ran along the hill-side to intercept her should she gain her feet; but it was all right, she was only opening her mouth in spasmodic gasps, and I settled her. The trackers came up in great glee; they had seen the tigress come over the summit of the hill and enter the rocks on our side half an hour before we saw her; they were in a large tamarind tree away in the plain. On examining her we found that she was in milk, which was the first intimation we had that she had a cub; she was in the prime of life and condition, and had no lameness or apparent injury to account for her having taken to man-killing.

“I may here say that we never killed her cub. It was heard calling to its mother for several nights around Iyenpoor, but we could not find it in the daytime, and it must have died of starvation, as had it lived we should have encountered it.”



PANTHER AT BAY.

LEOPARDS AND PANTHERS.



It is a mooted point whether the panther and leopard are distinct species. Although much smaller than either the lion or tiger, from their remarkable agility it is an acknowledged fact that they are quite as dangerous a foe, as will be learned from the following:—

The sunrises in South Africa are truly beautiful; in no other part of the earth have I ever seen them so worthy of unlimited admiration; the rarefied atmosphere of these table-lands is doubtless the cause. At break of day I always rose, and thus never missed a chance of seeing the great luminary take his first peep over the eastern horizon, and the morning in question was one of the grandest, most magnificent dawns that mortal ever witnessed. A few flaky, fire-burnished clouds hovered over the east after daylight commenced; slowly these ascended towards the zenith, and were replaced by those of a dark purple, the edges of which were margined by a thread of gold, which reflected from their centre

every shade—from deepest orange to blood-colour. Such were the advance-guard of great Sol; but round his majesty came forth a different escort—gay as the dresses of a Watteau picture or Court pageant when king and queen hold high revel. Indeed, they were gayer; for man has not yet conceived, nor in his experience yet learned to produce such lights and shades as waited like satellites upon the wondrous luminary, as he ascended farther and farther into the sky—a sky you could gaze into, as one could into eternity—without bounds, without limits, without end.

Game was heard round the encampment all night, so that my attendants concluded that we were about to have a great day's sport.

After having my coffee, I started. Three Massaras were my companions; they were all small active fellows, one being old, the others young. We crossed the open velt, and entered a wood. Here we discovered plenty of spoor, which was not fresh enough to encourage pursuit. Pushing on again, we traversed another plain, and again our path led into timber-land. Soon we found the trail of giraffe, a wondrous track, and more like the tread of a man in a loose-fitting slipper, which had a course deep seam up the middle. After following this for an hour, we crossed the spoor of zebra; for this animal has taken the place of the quagga and

Burchell's zebra, which occupies the plains farther to the south. For a quarter of an hour the Massaras displayed their skill and perseverance as trackers. Not at a walk did they follow the game, but at a run, so swift, that they kept Ruby at a good round trot, and so unerring, that not for a moment did they appear at fault. This led us from one cover to another, from open land to where the underbrush became so thick that fifty yards could not be seen ahead. Here they stopped, picked up a few twigs and broken leaves, cautioned me to remain where I was, while they stole away in the most mysterious manner.

Wonderful fellows are these bushmen—they rival the snake in its subtlety, the eagle in its power of sight. Where are they now? I might well ask; for, as far as evidence of human creatures being in my vicinity goes, I might as well have been at the North Pole, or in the centre of the sand-bound Sahara.

At length one, in a moment afterwards the others, returned to me; their appearance was as unexpected as if they had been shot up from the bosom of the earth. The elder took the bridle of my mare, and, followed by the others, we made a short *détour*; at a signal I dismounted, walked fifty yards, and before me, not seventy paces off, were forty or more of the beautiful game feeding.

So conscious were they of their security, that not a head was raised from the inviting leaves on which they browsed.

I felt it was a shame to destroy the harmony of the picture—to awake the still placid scene by the report of the deadly rifle. Sooner than fire, I could have gazed on and on till all the animal life had passed away like a dissolving view. But my people must have food : to give way to my feelings, and refuse to commit slaughter, would cause them all to desert, and leave me without the power of supplying the necessities of life.

I singled out a victim ; she was a beautiful mare, with hind quarters so round and strong that she might have been mistaken for a pampered brewer's horse. I wished to save the unfortunate pain, so I took most careful aim ; but at the moment I pressed the trigger she moved, and the ball lodged rather too far back. Still down she fell, and struggled for a long time unsuccessfully to regain her legs.

In the meantime all the herd trotted round and round her, gazing with sympathy upon her prostrate condition, and expressing wonder in their eyes at what could be the cause of her disaster. I might have shot now, not one, but half a dozen, and my Massaras in a most unequivocal manner, protested against my apathy. Still I was not to be moved, on the ground there

was meat and enough ; so I would not have taken the life of another under any circumstances that could be urged.

Approaching the struggling victim, its comrades fled. I would here have delivered a final shot, but my attendants were before me, and buried their assegais in its marvellously beautiful flanks ; but this attack seemed to produce new vitality, for the zebra rose, rushed headlong with open mouth at me, which charge I avoided by springing behind a tree—and disappeared into the forest. For two hours my attendants followed her spoor ; at length we overtook the victim, sick in body, and powerless to go farther. A second shot brought her down, a mass of inanimate matter. It was cruel work from beginning to end, and, gentle reader, believe me, I was unwillingly the assassin.

The vultures swooped down from their home in the distant skies ; soon every tree was loaded with them, and I felt I had done an evil deed when I had fired the shot that was to provide these foul feeders with a meal.

By breakfast-time I was home, spent an idle day about camp, and at three in the afternoon was ready to get into the saddle. I did not wish to kill game, but to see it. Crossing an adjoining watercourse, we entered a broad velt ; all the dogs were with me, and evidently anxious for a

run. Little Porty, an abbreviation for Portobello in Scotland, where she had been born—a present from the sincere, earnest missionary of Bamanwatto—barked, and otherwise expressed her pleasure, within dangerous proximity of Ruby's fore-feet. The stein-buck and the diker-buck broke from their retreats, and scampered off on fleet limbs to sanctuaries where they would be safe from further disturbance; but the dogs heeded them not, for they were too swift of foot.

The plain that we were traversing now was very flat and smooth, with but a sparse covering of the most diminutive bushes on it; it looked as if nothing larger than a meer-cat could have found shelter upon its surface from the human eye; but the large *Felidæ* know how to secrete themselves, for Nature has presented them with a coat admirably suited for such a purpose.

With a slack rein I rode; the dogs were clustered around me, for the heat of the afternoon and want of water had commenced to tell upon them, when up sprang the largest leopard that I had ever seen, and at an easy canter, grunting at every stride it took, made for a few scattered trees.

The appearance of the game was so sudden, that it was some moments before I left the saddle, and when I got ready to shoot, the dogs were between me and the object of my aim. At

length I got a clear shot, and fired ; the bullet ricocheted under the leopard's feet, but in doing so hit some part of its body. However, giving no more evidence of its mishap than a shorter and more savage growl, as well as an acceleration of speed, it pursued its course as heretofore. By this time the dogs were crowding it, but none dare lay hold, for such an act of temerity would have insured instant death.

Soon the trees were reached ; but instead of the leopard taking shelter in them, it turned round on the dogs, and the pack scattered like chaff before the wind. I approached, and got off my horse, having taken my double gun in place of the lately-discharged single-barrelled rifle. To my surprise none of the bushmen would go closer. The dogs, owing to my presence, became more and more bold and clamorous ; one cur that I had picked up at Hartebeestfontein, near Klerksdorp, particularly distinguished himself ; but his prowess cost him dear, for the now thoroughly enraged cat made a dash forward, and with a sweep of her paw gave Macquire—for so I called him—such wounds, that he could scarcely crawl from the scene of the accident. If this continued longer, I clearly saw that not one of my curs would be left, so I advanced to get a clear shot, and so terminate the matter. This was difficult, as the dogs

always kept between me and the game; but I continued to approach closer and closer. However, the panther had singled me out for its next victim; with a couple of bounds it cleared the yelping hounds, and in a moment would have been on me, but that a snap shot stopped it in its charge; as, maimed and incapacitated for further injury, it bit and clawed the dust, I gave it a second barrel at a short range, and thus ended the fracas.

With the exception of the buffalo, this is the most dangerous animal that can be encountered; its activity is surprising, and its vitality unequalled. Moreover, it exceeds all other animals by its audacity at night in approaching an encampment, when dogs are its favourite prey. Horses are also among its principal victims, especially colts, and many are the inhabitants of Soshong who have justly to complain of the serious damage they have suffered at its hands.

Rocks and coppies are the favourite resort of the leopard: never before or since have I found it on the open velt. The animal just killed was as large as a two-year-old lion cub, exceedingly high on its legs, and very light in the body—more resembling my old friend the hunting leopard, or cheetah, of India, than any of the species I have previously met in Africa. Its body was beautifully

marked, each primrose having a clearly defined yellow centre.

I am convinced that in Africa there are three distinct species of leopard; the first, thick and massive about the body, like a well-fed domestic cat, yet low in the shoulders, and light in the limb. The next stands taller, has coarse hair, and is very imperfect in its markings; the head is narrower and more pointed, while the limbs are stronger built and evidently more calculated for speed than those in the first mentioned. The last, an example of which I have just slain, stands high on its legs, possesses a beautiful and regularly-marked skin, and limbs that are really extraordinary in their size and power, while the tail is shorter than in what I claim to be other species. Since my return home I have spoken to Mr. Bartlett, the well-known naturalist and superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, concerning this subject, but he apparently differed from me.

On another occasion I made the acquaintance of one of these spotted beauties.

During the night, an adventure occurred at the bushman's camp, about two hundred yards off. When near Ladysmith, in Natal, I bought a dog for a few shillings, resembling more a harrier than any other breed. It was a spiteful, bad-tempered, cowardly brute, and always preferred

the society of the servants to my own. Consequently I did not love it—rather the reverse, although I had never shown it any unkindness. However, this was the kind of brute it was—if the foreloper was going to the South to herd his cattle, and I in the reverse direction to shoot, Mario, so named because of his grand voice, would give me the cold shoulder and follow the former. Well, he had preferred leaving the waggon and taking shelter under the lee of one of the heathen, doubtless having secured a considerable quantity of the sleeping man's caross over his back, when a hungry leopard spied him, hooked him out with his paw, and carried him off, in spite of the rescue attempted by the bushmen, armed with fire-sticks.

Being deprived of this dog, I did not mind, but the bushmen assured me that the leopard having been successful in his first effort, would not cease to come nightly till he had carried off every one of my favourites.

To prevent such a result, soon after I rose I made all my employés turn to and cut sufficient prickly mimosa to erect a formidable screen on the three sides of the waggon next the woods.

About nine o'clock, with three Massara bushmen, I started to hunt for meat. My encampment had become quite a place of rendezvous for all the people in the district, each of whom expected

food, and such quantities of it, that they would have consumed an ox a day. To give an idea of how much they can eat, I will mention what has come under my observation, not once, but many times. After eating incessantly an hour or two—in which space of time they would have put out of sight six or seven pounds of flesh—they would leave the fire and go into the bush to become sick. That performance over, they would return and gorge as if nothing had happened. A zebra as big as a galloway fourteen hands high would not last them over a day. So, with a crowd of this kind about me, I could not be expected to spare the game.

The early part of the day was successful. Ruby, who was very fresh, I had to take down a peg or two, an opportunity soon presenting itself. A brace of striped hyenas jumped up in front, so I gave the larger a burst, and in a mile finished him with my revolver. About an hour afterwards, a splendid koodoo (todo, Kaffir name) rushed past, at a distance of fifty or sixty yards. In a moment I was off the mare, took sight, and fired; but the bullet fell short, and the game entering some dense underbrush immediately afterwards, I did not get time to put in the second barrel.

This antelope is truly a splendid specimen of the family to which he belongs, is exceedingly graceful and active, frequently reaching the

weight of five hundred pounds. Rocky, irregular ground, and the sides of coppies are its favourite haunts, although it may occasionally be seen in localities of quite a different nature. Its massive horns, with a corkscrew twist ascending them from the butt to near the point, are formidable weapons; so that, when brought to bay, the sportsman had better be careful. Their meat is exceedingly good, and their hide makes a valuable leather.

Leaving the koodoo to take care of himself, which it was quite evident he was capable of, we directed our course to another range where mimosa grew in abundance. This alteration of direction had not long taken place, when one of the bushmen seized Ruby's head-stall, and pulled her, and me—for I was on her back—behind a bush. Receiving a signal to alight, I dismounted, and cautiously followed one of the guides, when he pointed out eight giraffes feeding. Their tremendous height, long necks, short bodies, high withers and low rumps, it matters not how often I see them, make me feel disposed to wonder at their structure, and almost laugh at the absurdity of their appearance. But of one thing all may feel certain, that the Great Constructor of the universe has most admirably adapted them for the part they have to play in it.

I had my Martini-Henry in my hand, so,

although the distance was over 200 yards, determined to take a shot. The reason of my coming to this conclusion was, that the ground was so bare between us, that I felt convinced any attempt at a stalk would prove a failure. Accordingly I took sight at the nearest female (males are so musky, that it requires the stomach of a black man to enjoy it as food), fired, and she fell all of a heap.

Her companions did not seem to understand the matter, but with uncertain gait commenced to move off. As the line they were pursuing would take them within a hundred yards of me, I jumped on Ruby's back, and shoved a fresh cartridge into the breach of my rifle. This action warned the quarry where the danger was, so off they went at their extraordinary trot; but, however funny their gait appears, it has a marvellous capability of covering the ground.

Dear little Ruby! I christened you so because I thought you perfection, in her keenness to be alongside the game, if I do not look out, will pull me over her head. It takes a good horse to catch a giraffe, but even with my weight up, if the ground were at all suitable, it never appeared any trouble for this little mare to overhaul them.

I singled out a cow of giant proportions, one of the largest I had ever seen; she was attended by a calf about seven feet high. Now this old

lady was very crafty : soon she found out that speed could not save her, although she put on a wonderful turn of it, and made her tail describe a circle, of which the root was the centre and the tassel the circumference ; so she altered her tactics, and made into some very dense bush, the little one sticking to her heels like a leech. At length I compelled her to leave this cover, when she made a dash out over the open, evidently with the intention of gaining some thick wood at the end of the coppy.

No need of spurs ; my little grey laid down at once to her work, every stride brought me closer and closer. Steady, my lassie, take the left side, if you please, and my rifle was cocked to deliver my shot, when Ruby put both her feet in an ant-bear hole or some other excavation, and I went flying over her head, how far I cannot say, into a clump of thorn-bushes.

For a length of time, giraffes, horses, and rifles were things I had no knowledge of. At length I became sufficiently conscious to set up ; my dear little mare stood over me, and looked with her large expressive eyes as if she wondered what was the matter. I tried to pull myself together, but for a time I could not ; I felt no pain, yet I felt no power, though I was conscious the sun was setting. Not for my own, but for Ruby's sake, I made another effort ; the result was partially

successful. Then I thought of my rifle. I searched for it and found it with the barrel choked with sand. I had sense enough to know that in such a state it was not serviceable, and therefore cleared it.

Used up I undoubtedly was ; a haze was over my eyes and an amount of lassitude over my body that I felt indifferent to what might follow, yet my affection for the little mare told me that I must light a fire, or run the risk of losing her during the night from the attack of some skulking marauder. Soon I found a fallen tree ; it had long been blown down. I gathered the limbs and piled them beside the trunk ; the smoke gave way to fire, and the fire hungrily seized upon all that was in its vicinity and suited to its taste.

I have said I cared not for myself, whether devoured by wild animals or not was perfectly indifferent to me ; I wanted to lie down and rest, possibly not to die, but to be in absolute rest. I was about to give way to my inclination when Ruby neighed ; I looked up, and there were my Bushmen—they had followed the spoor to where they found me. I understood not their language, neither did they mine, still I became aware that they wished me to go to the waggon by repeating the word *Kiloé* (Bechuana for waggon), and I consented, perfectly indifferent to what I

did. To get into the saddle was a work of labour, but with assistance I succeeded. One of the Massaras led the way, the other two held me in my seat by my thighs.

It was a long, long tramp, and much of the way was passed over in a semi-conscious state.

The night air had freshened me up; the motion of riding had, I believe, assisted, for the stupor which had previously overpowered me began to give way. At least, I remember clearly the Bushmen indicating by signs that my rifle should be ready for use. We then entered some dense reeds. Among these we apparently wandered for hours; at length I became cognisant that we were lost. If so, it did not matter much, so perfectly indifferent I felt to everything. However, the Bushmen again moved forward and gained an open space. They had scarcely done so when two lions roared, apparently from the place we had just left. Anxiety for the mare—conscientiously I do not think it was for myself—made me make a farther effort to pull myself together; and while the Massara lay at length upon the earth, the better to see anything approaching, I stood prepared to use my weapon.

This state of watch continued fifteen or twenty minutes, when I thought I heard the report of a gun. In an instant my attendants were on their feet, and pronounced the mystic word *Kilolé*, and,

leading my horse off to the left of the course we had formerly pursued, brought me to our encampment in less than an hour. On looking at my clock it was exactly half-past three. For nearly a week others had to hunt to keep the waggon supplied with meat. To Umganey's unremitting attention I believe I owe my life.

It is impossible, and perhaps not desirable, to enumerate the quantity of the game killed by me on this velt. With the exception of elephants and ostriches for the sake of their ivory and feathers, I endeavoured not to slay anything that was not required; however, in thus limiting the slaughter I was not always successful, for the guide, who was an excellent hunter and very fair shot, had had the loan of one of my eight-bores, and with it dealt out, I fear, terrible destruction. At night he frequently came and tumbled into the waggon a tusk or two, or shoved into the tent a bundle of feathers, my share of his success in his hunt.

Thus hours drifted into days, and days into weeks; from one place to another we shifted our encampment, but still the pot, or rather the flesh, was on the fire. Elephants now commenced to get scarce, for these wily animals, having been so much hunted, betook themselves to the hills adjoining to the eastward, where the tsetse abounded, and pursuit on horseback was impossible.

From my waggon, soon after break of day, I have seen numerous varieties of game within a quarter of a mile. Any man who could handle a gun fairly might have gone forth and dealt destruction in the ranks of each.

If I had had a companion, one to whom I could talk, whether he were black or white, I should have been satisfied; but I was alone, veritably alone, and with attendants about me who regarded me as a milk cow, the cow to be sacrificed as soon as Nature prevented it from giving a supply of the lacteal fluid.

On my homeward journey in '76, between Bamanwato and Sechelle's, one of these graceful carnivora, a leopard, deprived me of an ox in the following way:—

At Mashue a bullock, lately purchased and badly treated by his companions, came to a most untimely and unexpected end. Wildebeest spoor was so fresh and abundant around us that I resolved to take my rifle and go in pursuit of them. A Bushman who lived in the neighbourhood was easily induced to accompany me as spoorer. Trees were small and far between, while the mapaney brush had given place to the ivory-needle thorn, causing the surface of the country, which was rolling, to be far from enlivening. The sun was unusually hot, the air was oppressive, and the distance seemed to quiver from the mirage effect

of the atmosphere. Still, these disagreeables were in my favour as far as finding game was concerned, for the wild animals, quite as much as man, dislike travelling long distances under such uncomfortable circumstances.

I found my attendant thoroughly conversant with his present employment, for he tracked with such rapidity and certainty that it was most difficult to keep up with him. However, like an old experienced greyhound who refuses to pursue the tortuous winding of the hare, but runs cunning, so did I. But even with this artifice I could scarcely keep the Bushman in sight, and if a shot had presented itself I was so much blown that I doubt very much if I could have held my barrel straight. At length, very much to my satisfaction, I saw the spoorer stop, look back, and wave his hand. Forward I pushed with increased rapidity till I reached him, when, motioning me to stoop, he took me up the slope of a sand doon, over which, when I looked, I perceived about thirty wildebeest feeding at a distance of about four hundred yards. Deeming this too long a shot to be certain of killing, I endeavoured by signs to make my gillie understand that I wished to get closer to the game. For some minutes my pantomimic actions were not understood, but at length his expression told me that I was comprehended, so we retraced our steps for a short

distance, then went across wind for several hundred yards, and again approached the game, a small sand hill intervening between me and them, on reaching the summit of which I found myself within two hundred yards of several of the herd. I picked out a fat cow and took sight, but my hand trembled so that I hesitated to fire. I removed the rifle from my shoulder, trusting that in a few seconds I should recover from my shakiness. After drawing a deep full breath I again took sight and fired; the object of my aim dropped. Shoving a fresh cartridge into the breech of my rifle, the Bushman and I ran down to despatch the victim. When within ten yards of the game it made a violent struggle and regained its legs, and, certainly surprising me by the activity it displayed, charged straight at my sable attendant. With wonderful agility he skipped on one side, avoiding the onslaught, at the same moment burying his assegai deep in his assailant's flank. The wounded animal did not return to the attack, but almost at an incredible pace followed the route of his comrades. As it passed me, about twenty-five yards off, I fired at its flank, but I was so nervous, so excited, that I believe I made a clean miss.

For more than an hour we spooed this animal, but the only reward granted us for our trouble was the recovery of the assegai, which, from the

blood-marks on the blade, must have penetrated several inches. Giving up the pursuit of the wounded wildebeest as futile, we turned our steps to the south and crossed about half a mile of country, where we came upon giraffe spoor. The trail, which was very stale, told that they were only three-quarter-grown animals. Travelling on farther to the south, we crossed where quagga had just been. The Bushman at once took up this spoor and went off at such a rate of speed that in ten minutes it was a clear case of bellows-to-mend with me. However, I struggled along through the heavy sand, although I was scarcely able to draw one leg after another, till, through my slow progression, I lost sight of my spoorer altogether. I was debating in my mind whether to go on or turn back, when the Bushman returned, and the following interesting conversation occurred between us :—

When he was close to me, I said, “Kiloé” (Bechuana for waggon), meaning I wished to go to it.

“Petsi,” he answered, and pointed to the west, thus indicating that zebras were close at hand.

Again I said “Kiloé,” and he answered “Petsi,” and showed not the slightest inclination to give way to me. Knowing that these fellows consider an extra ten miles nothing if there is a prospect of getting a good feed, I doubted much the pro-

priety of following him ; but when I commenced to look about, and became convinced that without his aid I should never find my way home, I made a virtue of necessity and followed him. However, I was agreeably surprised—in twenty minutes he brought me within shot of the game, and I bowled over a fine fat mare. My attendant at once set to work and cut off the carcase as many of the choice morsels as he could carry ; so, with a load of quite one hundred pounds of reeking flesh on his back, we retraced our steps homewards.

During our hunt we had at first travelled west, then east, so we had not such a distance to traverse as might have been imagined ; and my attendant went as direct to the waggon as a bird would fly to it. Thus, about an hour before sunset, we were in sight of my cattle. Signalling the Bushman to go home with the meat, I left him, and returned to the right to have a look at them. As usual, the little ox was almost a quarter of a mile from the others. A “herd” might possibly have rectified this, but as there were no habitations near, and consequently no mealy fields, and the only water to be found for miles was in the vicinity, there was no fear of the oxen straying or doing mischief, so I had permitted the foreloper to remain in camp. Well, I had a look at and a talk with Swartland, Ackerman, Buffle, and, in

fact, with all, when I turned my steps towards the new purchase. I had decreased the distance between it and the other bullocks by one-half when a leopard sprung out of the bush, and in a couple of bounds lit upon the poor creature's shoulders, seized it with its teeth just in front of the withers, while the claws of one fore-foot were deeply embedded in the neck, those of the other in the back. So sudden was the shock that the ox fell upon his knees; but in an instant after it had gathered itself together and started off over the velt at a pace that I had never seen bullock make before. Oh that I had Ruby now with me! What would I not have given for her services at that moment, for I little doubt that I should have been alongside the treacherous, bloodthirsty assailant before it had been carried by its prey half a mile; but it was useless to regret the want of help that it was impossible for me to obtain, so, tired and exhausted as I was, I dragged myself along after the fugitive. While the stricken beast fled the leopard was still on its back, and no doubt was making such good use of its tusks as soon to cut into its victim's spine.

It was the more provoking as the cat appeared anything but a large one—certainly it was not higher than an ordinary-sized water-spaniel, although of course much longer. Well, I followed the spoor of the ox long after I lost sight

of both, till I was reminded by darkness setting in that it was time for me to return. Disappointed that I could not render aid to my poor beast I retraced my steps. Night rapidly closed in the landscape, so I hurried on—as I supposed—in the direction of the waggon. However, there was no moon, so, after quite a couple of hours' indefatigable tramping, I became convinced that I was wandering. Yet, in spite of this conviction, I believed confidently that I was near home, so I ascended one sand-ridge and then another, in the expectation of seeing the illumination of the sky caused by the waggon-fires, but, look in what direction I liked, such was not to be perceived. At length I gave the search up as a bad job and sought for a dead or fallen mimosa. After about an hour's futile exertion I discovered the latter, made a fire, and laid down with the hope of sleeping; but in this I was disappointed, for, soon after trying to seek repose, I was stung by a scorpion on the ankle, which the flames had doubtlessly driven irate from its sanctuary in the fallen tree. This was bad enough, but here my torture did not end, for I was assailed by red ants in such numbers that it was impossible longer to remain lying on the ground. In consequence I got up, piled more wood on the fire, and went so far as to consider myself the most unfortunate man on the face of the earth. However, no wild animals

came near me. In the distance I heard several hyænas wail and numerous jackals laugh; but they were a long way off, possibly holding carnival over the body of my slaughtered ox. When day broke I picked myself up, and with anything but feelings of regret left my uncomfortable bivouac. When the sun rose I walked towards it, and in a short time found my own and the Bushman's spoor of yesterday when in pursuit of the wildebeest. Taking the back trail, soon after I observed a line of white smoke perpendicularly ascending to the clouds. As I was not aware that any of the natives resided near here I concluded that it must be from the fires of my waggon. In this surmise I was correct, so reached my belongings by eight o'clock, when I found that Umganey and the driver had gone in pursuit of me. However, they returned about noon, having come across my spoor and tracked me home.

In another part of my journey, Master Spots paid me a visit. A description of the scene and the occurrence may not be uninteresting.

The first time I viewed this portion of the charming river, on the opposite bank basked several crocodiles, while francolins and guinea-fowls dusted themselves in the loose sand. In the adjoining trees was a quantity of the pretty little grey monkey, familiar to the neighbourhood,

while a little further down its course drank about a dozen of the awkward-looking, but powerfully-built bastard hartebeest. Elephants had been here lately; their spoor was to be seen all over the neighbourhood, and broken and felled trees attested the strength of this mighty rover of the forest.

The hippopotamus is also found, but not in such abundance as in years gone by. Nevertheless, every morning, before the dew has left the grass, his immense tracks are easily recognized. In the forays that this ungainly animal makes nightly in search of food, it raises its feet so slightly that all that obstructs his passage gets broken down, thus leaving behind a well-marked path.

Although I did not lose a driver here, I lost a dog, fortunately the very one of my pack that I could best spare; it was a cross between the bulldog and mastiff; it possessed not a particle of courage; and, worse than that, it had a hankering affection for the waggon and the good things that it contained, that made it no easy matter to induce it to follow me.

When I purchased the brute I truly thought I had obtained a treasure, and the way he fought with his companions to establish his position made me believe that he would prove a useful and formidable companion in the pursuit of the *feræ*



WILD DOGS AND KUDU

naturæ ; but he had not been with me more than a few days when he appeared to lose all heart and live but to gratify his appetite.

In these distant countries, and following such a life as I was then doing, the horse becomes one of the most watchful animals you possess. During darkness they will very seldom lie down, because I suppose in that state they could be taken at disadvantage by prowling marauders. The following incident happened in this way :—

After my habit, I had tied the little bay Basuto pony to the after-wheel of the waggon. I had been asleep several hours when I was aroused by a sudden jerk upon it. Picking up my gun and shoving my feet into slippers, I went out to discover what made the horse so restive. The night was fine, with a clear unclouded moon, such a moon that, with the exception of the hunter's moon in America, could nowhere else be seen. As far as I could note, there was nothing in the vicinity to alarm the animals ; so I turned my attention to the fires, which were now reduced to a mass of glowing ashes. On similar occasions, and under such circumstances (fine clear nights), fires are of little use ; still, as an abundant supply of fuel had been collected, I placed a quantity on my own fire—the after one just behind the waggon—then went forward, and did the same to the one in front of the leading bullocks. I noticed

that the majority of the oxen were standing and facing in the same direction ; still I did not consider that a circumstance deserving of particular consideration.

I scratched Swartland's withers and fondled his head, then spoke to Buffle, and afterwards had a talk with Poonah ; and while doing so I heard a yell from the waggon. In a moment I jumped on one side, so as to avail myself of the light of the fire ; almost instantaneously something passed between me and it. I fired a snap-shot, and, to my disgust, I found I had shot—dead as a stone—the worthless dog. At the moment I fired he was in the jaws of a panther, and the injuries he had sustained from its fangs showed that, if my luckless bullet had not ended his career, he could not have long survived the frightful gashes along his loins. It's no use regretting, but had my ball gone a foot farther back I doubtless would have had a splendid hide to repay me for my loss, if such it deserves to be considered.

WILD DOGS.

I AM induced to mention this animal as many seem to doubt its existence and as its character and habits are little known.

Just before outspanning at noon, a day's treck north of the Limpopo, we overtook a most wretched family party of Bushmen. When they first perceived us they appeared disposed to run away, but whether our manner was reassuring, or the number of black attendants that accompanied me gave them confidence, they stood by the road waiting our approach. Father, mother, and two little bits of bairns, not possessing enough clothing among them to make one respectable garment, and so thin and withered about the limbs, these were the components of this family party.

The man was armed with a small bow and a dozen tiny arrows, the points of which were poisoned with the milky juice of the *Euphorbia arborescens*. This plant grows abundantly about these parts and is an exceedingly deadly poison.

The wife carried on her back three or four ostrich eggs, doubtless filled with water, for their orifices were closed with a bunch of grass, their stock of liquid most probably having been obtained from sucking holes in the vicinity.

To those unacquainted with this method of obtaining water, an explanation might be interesting. A hole is made in sand showing evidence of moistness, into which is pushed a tube with a quantity of grass attached to its end. This forms a vacuum for the water to collect in, when it is raised to the surface and ultimately into the mouth of the sucker, after which it is most adroitly spurted into an ostrich shell. Of course no European, unless *in extremis*, would drink fluid thus treated. Still I know a noble colonel, who can frequently be seen in "the Row" during the season, who was only too glad to obtain a supply of water thus procured.

The callosities upon these poor creatures' bodies were fearful to look at; they doubtlessly are formed from lying upon the hard ground, without any intermediate substance to shield them from its irregularities. You should have seen the comical expression of delight in the two youngsters' faces when I handed them a large stick of beltong!

A good-sized piece of wildebeest and a gallon-and-a-half of cold mealy-meal porridge gladdened

the old people, who at once commenced to light a fire and make themselves comfortable.

It is really surprising how these people manage to exist; that they are not devoured by wild animals seems also extraordinary, for their home is in their haunts, yet they take no precautions for their safety. If the truth were known, doubtless a very great number die from their attacks.

These Kalahari bush-people are the most persevering and courageous hunters; once on the trail of game they never leave it till they kill; and their skill in stalking cannot be surpassed. Even the ostrich, the wariest of all game, falls before their tiny poisoned arrows. In fact, but for the Bushmen, the supply of wild ostrich feathers would be very scant indeed.

I had just succeeded in making these wanderers comfortable for the time being when the big Macalaca lad came to me. His musket was in his hand and his face wore a grave expression. Pointing with his hand, he uttered the magic word *Taow!* the Bechuana for lion.

Taking my double gun, I followed him; but although he endeavoured to point out something, for the life of me I could not see it. Indicating by gestures that he wished me to sit down, I did so, and he took a place by my side. There was some scrub between us and where the lion was

supposed to be, and if there were an animal there it could not leave its retreat without offering a shot. For a quarter of an hour we kept guard, and our inactivity became irksome, when first one, then a second, specimen of wild dog came forth and coolly stared at us. Unless they had been lying at length on the ground, it appeared impossible that they could have remained so long unseen. Did I shoot at them? I hear asked. No, not for the world. They were such grand animals, such thorough-looking sportsmen, that I gazed at them in silent admiration, wishing I were the possessor of both. They must have stood nearly thirty inches at the shoulder, looked like a cross between a greyhound and mastiff, and were a beautiful rich fawn colour. After surveying me for a couple of minutes they walked coolly off, as if the presence of man were to them a matter of the most perfect indifference.

A pack of these wild dogs, consisting of forty or fifty members, is known to exist within a few miles of this locality. They have frequently been seen hunting, and the Boers whom I left encamped by the Limpopo have suffered severely by their depredations. It is reported that even the lion occasionally is assailed by them and killed. When these encounters take place they generally originate through the dogs trying to drive the king of beasts off some prey he has captured.

From what I could learn they give tongue when hunting, and the pack run very close together when in chase.

Last year, near the village of Kaminyani, I came across a different variety of this species hunting. It was in this wise:—

I was going along at a slow tripple—a pace similar to what is designated “racking” in North America—when a hartebeest crossed our course. The poor brute looked as if he were fairly worn out, for his flanks were covered with sweat and dust, his head drooped, his tail hung close to his hind quarters and every movement of his legs denoted intense weariness. That he saw us there could be no doubt; yet he passed on, neither increasing nor relaxing his pace. To have shot him was possible; in fact, my boy was most anxious to do so, but I stayed his hand, as we had sufficient food to last us until the termination of this day’s ride.

I pulled up and watched the poor animal struggling over a neighbouring rise, for trees were sparse and brushwood only occurred in occasional patches. Several times it stumbled ere it reached the acclivity, which, once gained, would shut it from our view.

I could not help wondering why it fled and who were its pursuers; but my surprise was soon dissipated, for on the spoor of the fugitive I saw,

almost immediately after, several wild dogs. Then their number was increased to eighteen or twenty by some fresh arrivals. When they gained the track they all stopped short and took stock of my cavalcade, so fearless being their manner and so close were they at hand that I confidently expected they would attack me in preference to following up the trail of the object of their pursuit.

It appeared to be a toss-up in their minds which game would be the most succulent, but second thoughts brought them to the decision that the old hunt would be the best; so they resumed their chase of the worn-out hartebeest, departing over the *veldt*, running in a consecutive line, with heads and tails up, every few moments giving vent to their surplus feelings by a sharp shrill yelp, more to be compared to the squeak of the fox-terrier than to the speaking of a fox-hound.

The power of scent of these creatures must be really wonderful! Possibly they are much assisted by sight, for the tuft-grass leaves large patches of sand, on which the spoor of the quarry is easily discernible.

They never fail to kill their game (of this I am informed by competent authority) unless it reach water of two or three feet in depth, where the larger antelopes invariably seek shelter, as in

it they are able to strike their pursuers with their formidable feet and thus disable them in succession.

There are two species of wild dog upon this continent with which I am conversant. Those I have just alluded to are spotted like the hyæna, with bushy tails and large tulip-shaped ears, particularly full at the base. Their noses are short and in general characteristic resemble the hyæna, with the exception that they do not droop off at the hind-quarters as that very ungainly animal does.

The other sort is a large yellow beast, with many of the details in construction peculiar to the English mastiff, as previously described.

When at Heilbron, in the Orange Free State, last year, Mr. Francis, proprietor of the Temperance Hotel in that village, described to me a wild dog that in such numbers infested his farm, when living in the Old Colony, that it was impossible before they had made a free use of strychnine to keep cattle. These were striped instead of spotted, very light of body and limb and wonderfully fleet, at the same time possessed of courage that amounted to recklessness. Several of these animals he had had in a state of captivity, but from their exceedingly high-strung nervous temperament they invariably died in a week or two. Strange as it may appear, nothing terrified

them so much as a sight of some of their domesticated *confrères*.

It is universally believed by natives that the Indian tiger is occasionally killed by packs of wild dogs (*cuon rutilans*).

These animals are not numerous ; their operations are of a character so destructive and harassing to game that no district could support them in any considerable number.

Their ranges extend over immense areas of country, whilst they seldom hunt in one neighbourhood for more than a few days, and that at considerable intervals, as the deer become so scarce that they flee the locality.

This wild dog is between the wolf and jackal in size, of a uniform deep rusty colour above, paler below, with a blackish brush, marked by spots or lines according to species. They run both by sight and scent, and their perseverance and endurance are so great that they rarely fail to kill any animal on whose track they start.

“From what I have seen of their style of hunting and of their powers of tearing and lacerating, I think there can be no doubt of their ability to kill a tiger or lion. I can call to mind two examples of their powers. One morning two dogs chased a spotted hind past my tent. One of them halted at sight of the encampment ; the other, which was within springing distance, made two snatches.

at the exhausted creature's abdomen and then drew off. The bites were inflicted with lightning speed. The deer went but a few paces when she fell, with her entrails protruding.

"On another occasion I heard the yapping of jungle dogs, and a noble spotted stag came racing down an open glade, his branching antlers laid along his back, and three wild dogs at his flanks. They had only time to make a snap or two each, when we interfered. The stag went but a few yards and fell, and was speared by one of my men. In the moment's biting it had been emasculated, and about four pounds of flesh torn from the inner part of its thigh.

"Similar injury might easily be inflicted on a tiger. I have seen more than one fly from a pack of curs—a very mangy one gallantly holding on to the royal beast's tail on one occasion—and it is probable a tiger would turn from wild dogs. The latter's habit of hunting almost exclusively during the day would be in their favour in an encounter with a tiger. Their tactics are not to attack in front; they never expose themselves to horns or hoofs of powerful deer. They would bite a tiger, should he run from them, in parts that might speedily cause his death.

"A Shōlaga told me that he once saw a tiger, confronted by wild dogs, sitting on his haunches against a bamboo clump. The dogs, two or three

in number, were making no active demonstration, but walked close to him in a most impertinent and unconcerned manner. The Shōlaga having no personal interest—a native's first consideration in all matters—in the result of the meeting, left the rivals. It is possible in such a case, if the tiger maintained his position, the dogs would withdraw, as they could do nothing against him in a front attack. Causes of hostility may arise between the tiger and wild dogs, through attempted interference with each other's prey; otherwise, it is not clear why the dogs should molest the tiger."

The above is from Mr. George P. Sanderson's charming work, and it so closely tallies with my own experiences that I feel convinced that the wild dogs of Asia and Africa if not identical are very nearly so.



A DEATH-STRUGGLE.

B E A R S.



FIRST in order I take the grizzly, a native of the spurs and cañons of the Rocky Mountains of North America, for it is incomparably, by size, strength and ferocity, the superior of all the members of the same genus to be found scattered over Europe or Asia (there are no bears in Africa).

These formidable animals are, I believe, possessed of more power of destruction than any wild beast on the face of the earth, nor is this to be wondered at, when they frequently reach the enormous weight of fifteen hundred pounds; in fact, I have seen one from the State of California, in captivity, which was said to weigh two thousand pounds. It truly was a monster, and I am thoroughly convinced it could not have scaled much less.

If the reader will accept the size, and learn that the brute's disposition is eminently aggressive and destructive, he cannot fail to see how dangerous to the hunter must be a conflict with such a foe.

In British India it is an accepted fact that more people are annually killed by bears than by tigers or panthers. Well! the Asiatic animals are to the grizzlies what a harrier or collie dog is to a mastiff.

In the year 1866 I was shooting in the Rocky Mountains. The season was the commencement of autumn, and the majority of the wild fruits which grow on their slopes in the greatest profusion were ripe.

Daily I had seen the tracks of grizzlies, but thus far on this trip had not succeeded in coming across them. So numerous were the searches I had made for this noble game without success, that unwillingly I was compelled to resign all hope of interviewing this monarch of the brute creation.

On the day in question I shot a splendid specimen of the wapiti deer, a finer stag, or one ornamented with a more magnificent set of antlers, had never heretofore fallen before my rifle. When I straddled the poor prostrate animal to cut its throat, I had barely made an incision with the point of my knife when it sprung to its legs, and in doing so hurled me off some distance, at the same time inflicting in my thigh a wound which, if not dangerous, caused a great deal of hæmorrhage. This was the last struggle of the gallant deer,

for in fifty yards it fell headlong to rise no more.

Having nothing to bind up my wounded limb with I returned to camp for the necessary materials, resolved to come back later on in the day for the choice pieces of venison, the hide and horns.

It might have been four in the afternoon when I returned to claim my game, when to my surprise I saw a huge grizzly standing over the carcase of the wapiti. For some minutes I gazed on the scene with surprise, and even now will acknowledge with considerable feelings of hesitation, whether I should attack the foe or not. Why did I hesitate? may well be asked. For this reason, that I knew that the moment I became the aggressor it would be a duel *à la morte*, for there was no sanctuary near in which I could seek shelter, and if a miss-fire occurred—well! it would almost to a certainty result in my death.

Flesh and blood can stand a good deal, and I am inclined to believe that I would have quietly submitted to Mr. Bruin making a meal of my game without protest, but when the grizzly took my property by the nape of the neck and commenced to walk off bodily with the whole booty, I must say I felt a little indignant with my adversary and far from satisfied with the pusillanimous course I had pursued.

Placing fresh caps on my nipples—for those were the days of muzzle-loaders—I intercepted the course the freebooter was taking. Until I was within fire and twenty yards of him he did not observe me, but when he did, down went the deer, upwards curled his lip, showing as pretty a set of ivories as ever dentist made, and his eyes expressed rage of no measured quantity or deficient quality. I believe then that I should have taken to my heels, but to do so was impossible, for my speed of foot would never have enabled me to escape, and I was well aware that retreat would bring on pursuit: thus of necessity I stood my ground. Up to this time the beast carried his head so low that I could not get a chance to aim at the horseshoe on the breast, alike destructive a shot to the *Ursini* family on both continents.

In such a situation coolness will alone save you, and so I felt.

My foe with slow and measured step advanced towards me. At last our propinquity became so close that I could not defer firing. I did so, aiming at the mouth, but the result was not satisfactory, for it only resulted in smashing the lower jaw of my foe.

As bears do not hug you (an error that has crept into natural history I know not how), I felt convinced that the principal weapon that my

antagonist could employ against me was now *hors de combat*.

A reader who has not been engaged in the chase of this animal would think that I was comparatively safe; but not so, with their fore paws they will hold you to them and with their hind ones scratch or tear you to pieces. However, fortune favoured me. Breathlessly I reserved my fire till the grizzly was close at hand—almost touching my gun—when the white crescent mark on his breast was exhibited, and, at such close quarters, I must have been a duffer indeed if I did not place a bullet in it, the result of which was knocking Mr. Bruin over all of a heap and causing me to be the possessor of not only a splendid bear's skin, but the finest pair of wapiti horns that had heretofore fallen to my rifle.

The following are narrated, illustrating the ferocity of grizzly bears, by my friend Dr. D. G. Forbes Macdonald, for some time engaged on the Boundary Commission in British Columbia:—

“Three men were out hunting and unexpectedly roused a grizzly. The bear charged upon the party. Two of the men were large and powerful. Instead of using their guns, however, on the enemy, they sought safety in flight. Their companion, though a small man, stood his ground: and, as the bear advanced, he fired at him, wounding him just enough to add tenfold to his

ferocity. The snow being deep, the man was soon buried in it, with the monster, furious and open-mouthed, above him. With great presence of mind he thrust his left hand into the animal's mouth and grasped his tongue, holding it with the determination of despair, while he unsheathed his knife with his right. In making a stab at the bear the point of the weapon struck the animal's paw, broke off, and in consequence became useless. The tusks of the infuriated monster had by this time met through the poor man's left arm, which fell helplessly from the brute's jaws all mangled and bleeding. He then thought his only hope lay in counterfeiting death, which he did, and fortunately succeeded in inducing the bear to believe that he had won the victory. After licking the blood from off his victim, the grizzly moved away some distance, and was attacked by a dog belonging to the party; but, paying no attention to his canine enemy, he again approached the man, who still lay motionless in counterfeited death, and, having licked his face, slowly retired. The two men who had run away, having viewed the whole fight from a safe distance, now, when the danger was passed, came up to their half-dead companion, whom they found severely injured in many parts of his body, and with a part of his scalp torn away. They carried him to a hut at a distance,

where, by careful attendance, he in a few weeks had all but entirely recovered from the horrible wounds he had received. A strong party, armed to the teeth, went early next morning in search of the grizzly, which, being easily tracked by the spots of blood on the snow, was soon discovered and completely riddled with bullets."

"Shortly before I left the territory, another encounter occurred between a miner and a bear, upon which he came suddenly in a small cañon. He had dismounted from his mule, his only chance of escape being to climb a tree, which he lost no time in doing. However, the grizzly soon followed him and seized him by the leg. With the desperate strength only known in danger, the miner had grasped a limb of the tree, and held on with one hand whilst he fired at the bear with the other. This caused the animal to let go the man's leg, but not to give up pursuit. Having paused for a few moments to examine how matters stood, it made another effort and seized the rifle, dashing it with violence to the ground. The miner kicked the bear in the snout with his uninjured leg so violently that she fell, turning a complete somersault. Feeling somewhat disgusted with the state of affairs she gave vent to her fury on the man's hat, which lay at the foot of the tree, tore it to shreds, and then coolly retired, but, alas! only to return when she

could make more sure of her victim. The miner descended, thinking all danger over, when up came the bear behind him, and, seizing him round the middle, pressed him to death. This sorrowful scene was witnessed only by an unarmed pioneer, who unfortunately was so panic-stricken that he did not venture in aid of the poor miner.

"The day following, this homeless and friendless man was committed to the earth in a spot selected for its quiet beauty and the security from desecration which it promised. Thus departed the stranger miner, who had come to see these lands so recently in the fulness of hope and joy. The scene was beautiful and solemn, the sky without a cloud, and the breeze, as it rustled among the leaves, brought refreshment to both soul and body. I gazed upon the blue canopy, calm as the unruffled ocean, beyond whose waveless azure lay the beautiful fields of heaven, whither the immortal spirit of the poor miner had gone to wander in eternal happiness. But the sad narrative ends not here. A troop of famishing wolves, in their midnight wanderings, discovered the newly-turned sod, and like hyænas of the desert, rifled the tomb of its sacred trust, leaving the dead man's bones, stripped of the flesh, as a token of their voracity."

I now come to the black bear, a much smaller

animal than the grizzly, but still capable of making a gallant resistance.

None of the *feræ naturæ* are better known in a state of captivity than this animal. What village schoolboy, however remote the hamlet in which he resides, cannot remember poor Bruin being led round by some half-washed, uncombed foreigner, or his forming a portion of the attractions which drew the gaping crowd to enter the strong-smelling precincts of the annually-visiting erratic menagerie? Alas! hard is the poor bear's life when he is thus a prisoner. In summer he is kept on half diet and shut up in a miserable den; in winter he is stowed away in a cellar, and possibly, at least once a week, baited with curs, that the blackguard owner may raise enough funds to carry on his vagrant itinerant life. How different this from the life the bear enjoyed in his native woods, wandering about at pleasure, enjoying every luxury of Nature that the season produces; and, if in a country subject to a severe winter, quietly sleeping through that portion of the year when the winds, loaded with frost and snow, whistle round his snug retreat. The black bear at one period was very widely distributed over the North American continent. Its range now, on account of the advance and increase of population, has been much restricted; still, wherever there are large tracks of uncultivated ground,

representatives of this species will be found, whether in Canada or Labrador, Florida, or the far West, until you reach the Rocky Mountains, beyond which I have never heard of the black bear being seen, the cinnamon bear (*ursus cinnamomus*) and the grizzly bear (*ursus ferox*) there supplying his place. So numerous still are the black bears in some parts of the United States that a portion of each year is set aside by the squatters and farmers for their capture, and large packs of curs, specially trained to assist, are kept for this purpose; and numerous instances are on record of thirty or even forty bears having in a couple of months fallen before one hunter's rifle.

The flesh, which is with justice much prized, is either salted down or smoked for future use; while the pelt furnishes a bed, or is sold to the traders, ultimately to be made into rugs for sleighs or the coarser kinds of furs for women and children.

The different sizes to which black bears attain in various sections of the country are somewhat remarkable, so much so that I have often been induced to believe that they were entitled at least to be considered varieties; but otherwise they are so similar in habits of life, choice of food and residence, that it would only be opening a path that might lead to innumerable intricacies without the probability of resulting in benefit. The

black bear of Michigan, Wisconsin, and the regions bordering on these States, never exceeds 250 lbs.; these are generally denominated hog bear: but when you descend the Mississippi and get into the cane brakes of Arkansas, numbers are annually killed that reach 4 cwt. Coming eastward, you find a still larger animal, and I have heard from undoubted sources that in the States of Maine and along the edges of New Brunswick 600 or even 700 lbs. weight is no unusual size for bears to attain. Doubtless these differences are occasioned by varieties or abundance of food that the different regions produce, not temperature or climate, as the difference between the latitude of Wisconsin and Maine is very trifling.

Without further preamble I will attempt a description. This bear is very short in carcase, with an unusually baggy, slack look; the legs are long and powerful in their sweep, and the animal can handle them with the skill and proficiency of a professed pugilist; the head is very nearly an equilateral triangle, with the nose for an apex; the ears are small and rounded, the same distance in situation behind the eye that the eye is from the nose; the measurement in circumference close in front of the shoulder is almost as great as behind, which gradually increases as it ranges backwards, till the loftiest

point of the spinal vertebræ is reached ; while the hind limbs, from their immense muscular power, as well as abundance of flesh, appear like the extremities of a man encased in pegtop-trousers. In walking, the toes of the fore-feet are turned in, while the use of the nether limbs is so human as to appear like a burlesque on *genus homo* ; but if a casual observer be thus struck, the anatomist or student of Nature recognizes in this exaggerated formation the means supplied by Nature to ascend trees, escape enemies, or earn its support. The colour when the pelt is prime is glossy black, but in early spring a rufous tint is strongly developed ; this is assisted by the undergrowth of wool becoming elongated and showing through the coarser black hairs that at other seasons are the only visible covering, unless a close and minute inspection be made. From the eyes, in a straight line to the nose, the fur is brown, with a tip of the same colour sometimes over the eyebrow. At the same time, exceptions, more particularly among those of the North-Western States, are to be found, which are black to the termination of the olfactory organ.

As a general rule, when this bear is in a state of nature, he is extremely timorous of man, flying from him with a stealth and rapidity almost marvellous ; but wound him, hurt him, even insult his dignity, and the huntsman may be

prepared for a conflict that will only terminate in death ; for, once engaged and drawn into conflict, his combativeness increases, never lessening till life is extinct. However, instances have been known where Bruin has not had these excuses for commencing hostilities. An old female engaged with her progeny in imparting to them her extensive knowledge of the world, some gallant lover worshipping at the shrine of his devotion, or scarceness of provisions and desire of gaining some certain retreat where appetite could be gratified, have been the exciting causes in rousing their otherwise peaceful temperament.

The first bear I ever shot was doubtless suffering from the last cause. I will narrate the circumstances. In the State of Wisconsin, near Green River, there are situated some beautiful retired sheets of water. These spots had long possessed me with their attractiveness, for game abounded in their vicinity ; the scenery was beautiful, and, above all, you were entirely free from man's intrusion. Could it be wondered, then, that seldom a week passed that I did not find time to visit them ? Summer had unconsciously glided into autumn, the dark dense covering of the trees had changed to all the gaudy hues of the rainbow, and the enlarged ripples on the water and occasional sighings of the wind predicted that at no distant period another shroud

than the green grasses would cover the surface of the earth.

On the day in question, when I left my couch, immense numbers of wild fowl were seen migrating southward—evident signs that cold weather had made its appearance north. So, hoping possibly to kill a swan, or a scarce specimen of wild duck, I determined to visit my lakes once more ere they were frozen up. At noon, when I started to fulfil my purpose, large flakes of snow were noiselessly descending, but not in sufficient numbers to obliterate my trail. The water reached, the first glance exposed a sight only seen by those who reside beyond the verges of civilization, where the wild denizens of the air or inhabitants of the land reign supreme. The surface of the water was covered with ducks of every variety; moving room even looked scarce. Still phalanx after phalanx came swooping down before the wind with the well-known velocity that a wild duck's wings command. "Quack, quack, quack," went the ducks on the water; a prolonged note from those in the air answered. The three notes were an invitation, the one note a hearty response, as willingly accepting the invitation as the most hospitable host could desire.

A few shots filled my bag, and I seated myself on a rock, regardless alike of snow or wind, to

admire and learn the instincts of the animal world. Hour after hour glided on and night was near as I returned my pipe to my pocket, unfolded my covering from around my gun locks, and rose to depart. The snow had, in the meantime, obliterated my path; still the familiar trees and the ever true-speaking mosses told with certainty the direction. Indolently and self-satisfied I broke into the bush on my homeward route; the weight of the game told heavily on my shoulders. When half of the journey (which I had long wished had been the whole) was reached, I heard a rustling in the bush, evidently caused by large game. Such a warning instantly aroused me, and, on the alert for further sport, I took all the surrounding visible objects in at a glance. In front was a bear. A monster to my vision he appeared, for I was uninitiated at that time—and I believe the eye has a trick of dealing in the marvellous with unaccustomed objects—and, to my horror, Bruin was coming directly towards me. My first feeling was to fly; next to ascend a tree; thirdly, to disappear into my boots. The second glance gave me more assurance. Mr. Bear was evidently on urgent private affairs; his whole manner bespoke this, and he did not see me; so I determined to stand still, hoping he would remain ignorant of my presence, or, at least, give me a fair show if compelled to fight.

Onward advanced Bruin; closer and closer he came, and the nearer he approached the further my heart went into my mouth. Still he was fifty yards off, and had plenty of time to change his course; but no such change took place; for if he had been a ball bowled at a wicket the precision of his course could not have been truer. Twenty yards could not have intervened between us when my presence became known, and the manner of welcome I received was far from encouraging, for he halted, sniffed in the air and gave an angry growl. I wished myself at home in bed, or at the Antipodes, or in any place but my present standpoint. For remember, reader, my gun was only loaded with duck shot, and I was green and, I fear, very faint-hearted. It was evident my appearance was not intimidating, for my adversary neither swerved to right or left, and his wicked eyes blazed forth flashes of malignant hate. Eight or ten yards more the distance was diminished, when, whether from fear that my last moments had arrived, or knowledge of animals' habits, I gave a shout—a feeble one, of no distinct note, I believe; but the result was fortunate, for the foe halted, and really seemed uncomfortable, occasionally glancing around, as if he believed retreat, if possible, would be advisable; but second thoughts are not always best. The irresolution was fatal, and the bear found it

so ultimately, for he again advanced towards me. When scarcely eight yards divided us a second shout brought him again to a halt, and, as he sat up, displaying his teeth—symptoms that too truly said, “I will teach you a lesson”—I let him have the contents of the right barrel, aimed for the nose, well knowing the shortness of range would throw the projectiles up. And so it did. At so trifling a distance the concussion was irresistible; both eyes were destroyed, the forehead up to the apex of the crown fearfully cut up, and the poor bear rolled over, clawing the injured parts in life’s last agony. Without hesitation I delivered the *coup de grâce* by discharging the second barrel at the butt of Bruin’s ear, thus surely putting a finishing touch to his earthly career. This bear weighed about two hundred and twenty pounds, and was, in the vicinity where killed, deemed a very large one.

When in the State of Maine, I was called from my writing, by the landlord of the small roadside hotel at which I was residing. He informed me that a bear had entered the clearing, where the forest had been cut away for cultivation, evidently with the intention of attacking a drove of sheep. Seizing my unloaded gun, and hastily charging both barrels with bullets, I rushed down to join him, bootless as I had been sitting. From an eminence, a few yards from the house, we took a

survey. No bear could be seen ; but the timid sheep were huddled in a fence corner, evidently having suffered no ordinary fright.

With anxious gaze we scanned the enclosure ; every moment a blackened charred stump, the memento of some giant monarch of the forest, was mistaken for the bear. Again and again our mistake was found out and a new object was metamorphozed into a Bruin. Ten minutes were thus spent, the flock of sheep became, if possible, more uneasy, when, with a sudden energy, they made a simultaneous dash and crossed to the far side of the field. Still no bear was visible, but that he was close at hand was evident. Loss of time or prolonged suspense began to make us careless ; an advance into the field had even been proposed, and was about to be executed, when the sheep made another start, evidently intent on returning to the position we found them in ; but as they passed a log out rushed Bruin and cut off the retreat of the hindermost. The poor victim made two or three feeble efforts to regain his fellows, then turned and looked his enemy in the face, and from that moment succumbed to fate, at the same time retaining the use of his legs. Nor did Bruin rush up and seize him. He only headed him off when inclined to turn out of the proper direction, driving him all the time towards the right side of the field, which edged on a piece

of swamp. Soon the fence was gained ; here the sheep's fortitude forsook him, and, as both landlord and self had followed as close in rear as advisable, we were witnesses of a proceeding almost incredible. Bruin was evidently in a magnanimous frame of mind, or was overcome by his natural politeness, for without worrying or mauling, never for a moment using his teeth, he picked up the poor sheep between his paws, placed it on the top of the rails, then pushed it over, and with the agility of a greyhound cleared the fence himself. The shock had roused the victim and reanimated him, for both walked off into the bush, the one satisfied to be driven, the other apparently a not over-exacting shepherd.

Following up the duo as rapidly and silently as circumstances would permit, we again came on both ; but the bear had been annoyed, or the sheep could or would not do what was wanted, for Bruin had seized the unfortunate and dragged him on a log, and was using both teeth and claws with animosity and purpose.

Making a stalk I got within twenty yards of both ; the sheep's head had already been almost severed and the hot and liquid gore was evidently giving intense satisfaction to the slayer. With a long steady aim I covered the white horseshoe on the bear's breast ; the gun was a large and heavy one, the necessary pressure of

the trigger was given, and without a moan, almost without a kick, the would-be despoiler and his prey fell to the earth together.

The shot was a good one : the results on dissection proved with what precision and force a solid bullet can be fired from a common shotgun. This bear weighed 400 lbs., and, from the decayed and worn teeth, must have been an old stager, in fact, I think age is wanted to give Bruin the courage and desire to attack and kill animal food.

The white shoe on the breast is commonly, in some sections of the country, the spot which the trapper waits to be exposed, to shoot at. A ball entering there, and going either upwards or horizontally, always proves fatal. However, behind the shoulder, very low down, is the favourite aim with me. In these cross shots, if obtainable, you always have more to shoot at, and the regions of the heart are reached nearer the surface. The butt of the ear, a little backwards, if close enough to make certain, is another deadly point ; but the size of this delicate and mortal place is small and should never be chosen beyond thirty yards ; the head-shot can, with conical bullets, easily be performed, but a spherical bullet, especially from a small-bore rifle, from the wedgeshape of the cranium, is very apt to glance off without injuring more than the skin.

In hunting bears with dogs, the commonest cur that has pluck enough to snap at his heels is the best animal for the purpose. The bear gets worried, then cross, and ultimately ascends the first tree that his judgment tells him is suitable, resting most frequently on the soonest reached branch out of harm's way, unless the hunter be seen or heard; if so, then the highest foot of sufficiently strong timber to support its weight will be selected. It is not uncommon on these occasions, however, for it to ascend too high for the strength of the limb, when, the bough breaking, both come tumbling to the earth. Although such a rapid and lofty descent would certainly destroy a man, Bruin will arise uninjured, shake himself, and trot off as if nothing had happened.

The vitality of the bear is immense. His powers of destruction, when wounded, are equally so. So, gentle reader, if it should be your fortune to go bear-hunting, pray be careful if you approach him when wounded. A sportsman's maxim that should never be forgotten is, "Always load your gun before you move from where it is discharged, and never let the temptations or excitement of the moment permit you to hurry when performing this useful act."

A great many bears have been killed with the knife only, but the person who performs so

dangerous a feat must truly be foolhardy and reckless of consequences, and in my belief such conduct is, except in cases of emergency, most unjustifiable. For one who returns safe in limb and skin from such a contest the majority who attempt it would be fearfully mauled, or very possibly disabled for life.

The black bear, in a state of captivity, is extremely restless, and when old, bad-tempered and treacherous, more especially should he have been teased in his youth; but when he roves the forest free, he is the laziest and most luxurious fellow, sleeping the greater portion of his time, feeding on nuts or luscious fruits, playing in the sun's heat with comrades, and seldom quarrelling with his brethren. When passages of arms take place love is the cause, and the battle is waged more in words than blows.

A few years ago, in the autumn, about midnight, I was passing through a chain of lakes in the State of Maine. The night was lit by an occasional star, struggling through the rapidly-fleeting dark clouds for an opportunity to show the earth its brilliancy. I was alone, and, save the splash of my paddle and the occasional weird-like call of the loon, all was still as the grave. In entering a narrow passage to avoid the weeds I had to hug the land so close that occasionally the limb of a tree would brush against me or my

birch-bark canoe. With a suddenness that made my heart's blood run cold, a yell from some unknown beast, loud, shrill, and unearthly, so close that I almost believed for a moment that the cause was within reach, echoed from tree to tree, and died away, reverberating in the distance. Again and again it was repeated. For awhile I remained motionless, till the cool breeze recalled me to myself, and I proceeded homewards. Next morning I returned to examine the place. A veteran hunter was my companion, and we found such convincing proofs that bears had been there, that one of them I feel certain produced this noise, my companion assuring me that at the period the sexes come together, if rivals are in the way, the call or note of defiance is quite dissimilar from their general voice.

Early in spring the young are born. At first they are very small. In six weeks they are able to accompany their mother, who cares for them with the greatest solicitude and attention, hauling the logs on one side for the cubs to obtain the coveted grubs and larvæ underneath; pulling down the uppermost branches that produce fruit; and if, by accident, the young should be placed in a position of danger, her life is always willingly sacrificed in their defence.

Walking across a portage in Maine, close to the borders of New Brunswick, in front of the

party of which I was a member, my gun loaded, in the hope of killing a partridge or two, I perceived a small animal, about the size of a King-Charles spaniel, running along the track a hundred or more yards in front of me. Without troubling myself to look closely, I concluded it was a porcupine, animals which were extremely common in the vicinity. Soon after, a dog belonging to one of my companions passed me; stooping to the trail he gave tongue, and went in pursuit at his best possible speed. In a few more moments I knew he had brought something to bay, and, proceeding to his assistance, I found a young bear, the size of a badger, treed in a six-inch sapling. Where was the mother? Answer says "Don't know;" for young Bruin, after a vixenish fight, was secured; and, although half an hour elapsed in the operation, the old lady still remained *non est*.

It is very common for bears to be killed after they have retired to their dormitory for the winter sleep. When living near Lake Couchachin, in Canada, I assisted on such an occasion. An Indian from Rama came to me in great haste, with the hope I would sell him some ammunition. From his earnestness and anxiety I knew that he had made a valuable discovery, which, after a little higgling, was disclosed. He had found a bear's retreat in a hollow log, nearly imbedded in snow,

and the ammunition was for poor Bruin's destruction.

Stipulating that I should have a share of the sport, I supplied the ammunition, and we started. The distance was short. Mr. Chippewa Indian knocked on the log and the writer stood at the entrance. Poor Bruin at length forsook his snug retreat, yawning and looking stupid as he emerged into daylight, when a bullet at less than five yards settled the matter. When a bear is thus housed in a log, should the weather be calm and cold a heavy vapour of steam perceptibly hangs over it.

For years many naturalists considered this species identical with the bear of Europe; but of later date all those accepted as authorities have agreed that the black bear of America and the bear of Europe are totally distinct species; and if any of my readers should have the opportunity, let them closely examine both, which will be found together at the Regent's Park Gardens, in London, and they will no longer hesitate that the conclusion is the correct one.

In following a flight of ruffed grouse, which had risen so far beyond range as to have prevented my getting a shot at them, I came across a perfect brake of wild grape vines loaded with fruit. I could not withstand the temptation of halting for a feed, for they had been touched with

frost, which changes them from the most unpalatable to the most delightfully-flavoured fruit. The day had been warm for the end of autumn, and I suppose the fatigue of my tramp, together with the delightful shade afforded, induced me to lie down, and, as might be expected under the circumstances, I fell asleep. How long I might have been in a state of oblivion I cannot say, but I was awoke by my companion, a mongrel English terrier, barking vociferously at some intruder. After a stretch, a yawn, and the usual awakening actions, I turned in the direction of Prince to see what on earth had raised his ire and disturbed my siesta, when—judge my astonishment—I beheld a large bear erect, pulling down the vines not twenty yards off, ignorant of my presence, but occasionally casting a furtive glance back at his angry assailant, who took precious good care to keep beyond arm's length. Men become cool in such situations, either from association or the power of controlling their feelings. My gun lay at my side loaded with number six; if Bruin found me out and became aggressive at close quarters, say eight or ten yards, I was prepared to risk the issue; if he would only move off a little way, still keeping to windward, I thought I might improve my opportunity by substituting a brace of bullets. Under any circumstances my gun would be required, so,

watching the first opportunity when the bear's back was turned, I brought my double-barrel close by my side and cocked each lock. Many may laugh when I say I did not feel nervous; but I did not, and remained watching with special pleasure the enjoyment that my foe appeared to take in crunching up whole bunches of the luscious fruit. As he worked farther from me, my dog became less demonstrative, only occasionally giving a suppressed growl, which his feelings were unable to control.

First one barrel was unloaded and the heavier missile substituted, then the next underwent the same operation, Bruin being now out of sight, still within hearing. But the tables were turned; if formerly I was prepared to leave him alone, I now felt equal to acting on the aggressive. Giving Prince a little encouragement, he again rushed to the attack, and it is wonderful with how much more ardour, knowing that his master's eye was on him. Soon I knew the dog had nipped him, for I heard a rush, and dogs will retreat towards their masters, which brought Bruin full in view. As the distance was greater than I liked, I hesitated to fire; but the bear had seen me, and, disliking my appearance, turned to make off; but the brave little cur was at his heels, and, as I cheered him to the attack, he never lost an opportunity of pinching Bruin's stern, who at

length "treed," to avoid the persecuting little pest which hung on his rear—the most desirable course for me he could have adopted. By the time I reached the spot the enemy had gained the first fork, not twenty feet overhead, and is it to be wondered at that at such a short range, with not a twig to intervene and with a clear view of his shoulder, one barrel brought him to the ground with no more life in his carcass than the usual death struggle? My trophy was not large, but well fed, and his hams afforded me for many a subsequent morning a *bonne bouché* worthy of a hunter.

But poor little Prince got into trouble before he reached home. As I struck the margin of the river which lay in my route, I observed a large bald-headed eagle sailing about. Keeping under the shelter of some brush, I waited for a chance. My right-hand barrel I had reloaded with heavy shot, and, as the bird passed about seventy yards off, I gave him a portion of its contents, which was responded to by his immediately reaching the ground with a broken wing. Prince, plucky with the issue of his late engagement, made a dash at the bird, but caught a tartar, for he was seized by both talons, and, but that I came to the rescue, would have been rendered useless for any other purpose than baiting a wolf trap. As it was, after I had killed the bird I had some difficulty in unloosening his claws, and I doubt if my

faithful little mongrel had lived to the age of Methuselah he ever would have been induced to tackle another eagle. This adventure occurred near Lake Simcoe.

In America, a bear-story and a snake-story are synonymous to crammers, to the generality of listeners. Knowing such to be the case, a man cannot help approaching this subject without nervous feelings, particularly when a bear figures as one of the principals among the *dramatis personæ* of the narrative. But it matters not, travellers appear to be born to be doubted. I do not hesitate to say that they will sometimes romance, but invariably the fiction portion is credited and the reality ignored. We do not need to look at the experience of modern times, our forefathers were impregnated with the same spirit; *vide* the reception poor Bruce received after his incredible hardships in Nubia and Abyssinia. A friend, in the true sense of the word, and myself, went to visit a small lake that was reported to swarm with trout. Almost believing that no such place existed, but as a tramp through the woods was never objectionable, we determined to make an effort to find it out. An old lumberman, long superannuated, gave us our instructions thus: "First go through the woods two miles north, then incline a little to the westward, and after about half an hour's walking

through a swamp you will certain sure make the pond."* To those who have not wandered through an American forest such instructions will be perceived to be far from lucid; to the thorough woodsman, however, it would be sufficient. Before we left the township road where we were to branch off there stood a shanty, at which we halted to put up the horse and buggy in which we had thus far travelled. From the head of the establishment we made inquiries, who, calling to his son who was within, gave him the following directions:—" 'Bub,'† take the gents and show them the pond." Now, "Bub" was a most communicative youngster, about fourteen years of age, and, scenting a dollar in the distance, hopefully undertook the job. A cow-path we, the trio, followed for more than a mile, then we continued on what is familiarly designated a blaze road—*id est*, a path marked out by a tree, at every hundred yards, more or less, having a piece scooped out of its bark. The walking was as bad as possible, for constantly we were delayed by giants of the forest who had been prostrated by the gales of preceding winters. At length, tired and frightfully worried by mosquitoes, we reached a brook, eight or ten feet in diameter but

* Small lakes in Maine are always called ponds.

† A Yankee father's familiar way of addressing his son; daughters after the same manner are called "Ciss."

deep and sullen as a canal; down this we pursued an erratic course, till, between two lofty bluffs, we came upon a beautiful sheet of water of an area of about forty acres. To fish it from the banks was impossible, for the shumack and cedar grew to its margin, so that no other resource was left but to cut a number of cedar logs and form a raft. An hour or more was lost in this operation, and when we had launched out we found that nothing but the smallest fry could be taken, although these were in such quantities that frequently we would have three or four rises to a cast. For an hour or more we fished indefatigably: still not one over a quarter of a pound rewarded our labours, and, when we landed for our picnic lunch, I determined to fish the stream with the hope of obtaining some heavier specimens. My friend, who felt indisposed, either from the effects of the sun or some State of Maine whisky (which is warranted to kill as far as a six-shooter), which he had been imbibing, refused to accompany me; so, with the youth who had acted as guide, I left him to ruminate over his transgressions or misfortune.

As I had supposed, large fish were to be found in the brook, and my basket began to groan under its weight, when I hooked my flies in the top of a larch that leaned over the water close in my rear. With all my efforts I could not get

them free, so, sending the lad aloft, I waited patiently for him to cast them off. The place where I stood was hummocky ; such lumps as you come across in the bogs of Ireland when snipe-shooting, only a great deal larger. With care and precaution the hummocks could be traversed without wetting a foot, but hurry would certainly get you between them, when over the boot-tops would be the consequence. For several minutes I had stood, to enable the youngster to get the line loose, when across the stream, but a short distance off, I heard an animal grunt : the spot whence the sound issued was a large clump of whortleberries, where some fallen timber lay. Not being quite certain that my ears had not deceived me, I waited, when the noise was repeated. By this time my line was free, and my juvenile companion descending, when I asked him to listen to the noise, for I felt convinced it emanated from no other than a bear feeding, enjoying his favourite *bonne bouche*, the blue berries. Young America listened ; Bruin gave another grunt of evident satisfaction, when the former, exclaiming " bear ! " slid down the tree with such agility as would have put in shade the majority of monkeys. As soon as he reached the ground off he started down stream ; but the funniest part of all was that my guide, in the precipitancy of his movements, must have tripped

over the hummocks at least half a dozen times in a dozen strides. When we had got thirty or forty yards off—for I followed, though scarcely as rapidly—my *amour propre* asserted itself, and I halted. Not so my companion; soon he disappeared through the labyrinth of shrubs and I remained alone. To my relief I found no bear was in pursuit, so, placing my rod against a stalwart hemlock, I ascended its branches to take a view of the situation. For a long time I could not discover Bruin, but at length detected a large mass of black fur, accompanied by two smaller ones, busily employed feeding. They had quitted the wet ground and were on the edge of the acclivity, where the mother was most industriously drawing the broken fragments of shattered logs on one side, while her hopeful progeny feasted upon the beetles and ants thus exposed. The old lady had neither winded nor heard us, and she remained sedulously pursuing her avocation, perfectly ignorant that her industry and strength were forming a subject of admiration to a son of Adam. At length their search for insects took them out of sight, and I descended to join my companions.

The day by this time was far spent, and, neither of us having arms suitable for an assault upon the happy family, we determined to seek the settlement and revisit the scene on the morrow.

Next day, at an early hour, with quite a reinforcement, all armed with most formidable firearms from the Spencer rifle to the old smooth bore and accompanied by a well-tried bear dog, we sallied forth. For miles we tracked Madame Bruin by the broken fragments of decayed timber and the numerous logs she had disturbed from their original resting-place. Finally, we thought she could not be far distant, and the dog was untied. Off he went like a thunderbolt, and in a quarter of an hour we heard him baying vociferously. Guns were looked to, the men most energetic previously now dropped behind, doubtless to examine their trusty rifles and see that the powder was up in the nipples; but when we reached Watch, what was our disgust, of course, to find that he had "treed" a covey of Canadian partridge.* Unwillingly we went to work and decimated this unhappy and unconscious brood, nor could all our efforts afterwards induce the unfailing bear dog to take up the desired track. Intensely disgusted we all returned, and bear-meat and bear-hunting for a long time were subjects that few of these would be hunters liked to hear mentioned by the residents of the settlement, for there was a strong suspicion that what was said on these subjects was done so in chaff.

* Willow grouse.



BETWEEN THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA.

BUFFALOES AND BISONS.

THE buffalo of South Africa, denominated by naturalists *Bos Caffir*, and by the Boers *buffle*, I will write of first, not that this animal is as large as the bison of Southern India, but because it is undoubtedly the most dangerous of the whole genus.

It possesses one distinctive peculiarity in its horns, that, when once seen, either in the live animal or in trophies, prevent it ever being confused with any of the other representatives of the *Bos* tribe. It is this: instead of what we might designate the roots of the horns being imbedded in sheaths, they appear externally, and are of great width and protuberance, the right separated from the left by a channel passing down the centre of the forehead. Nor does the African animal possess the shaggy coat about the neck and shoulders which is the characteristic feature of the North American representative of the race.

There are unquestionably more hunters killed by this powerful cunning brute than by any other of the dangerous game that is found in the

same habitat. Its speed is almost equal to that of a horse, and it does not always require a wound to provoke its hostility.

It was on the north bank of the Limpopo, about one hundred miles to the eastward of where the road branches off to Bamanwatto, that I first encountered this dangerous game.

I, with a couple of acquaintances, had been shooting the larger description of antelope in the early part of the day, when our attendants raised the cry that they saw buffaloes. My brother hunters had killed numbers of these beasts before, and, well knowing the danger of an encounter with them, at once proposed a halt, that we might consider the best method of attack, place fresh cartridges in our guns, give our horses a little breathing-time, and finally further tighten the girths.

The herd had evidently not seen us, or were indifferent to our presence, for they continued feeding without evincing the slightest suspicion of alarm. The ground on which they were was covered with grass about four feet high, while in the distance, say a mile or more, was a dense mass of many acres of reeds which margined a water-course. This doubtless would be where the herd would retreat to, for in all probability it was their actual home, for these brutes are never found far from water, and generally pass the heat of mid-

day in the thick aquatic plants that edge rivers in this part of the world, whenever the ground is flat and subject to overflow.

Withdrawing a little distance to gain the shelter of some rising ground, and thus to get the wind direct in our faces, we advanced slowly upon the quarry. At first, when they perceived us, no other expression of a knowledge of our presence was shown than that the stragglers joined the main body, who slowly closed in as upon a common centre.

A hundred yards now only severed us from the game; yet there was no indication of their taking to flight, but, on the contrary, quite the reverse, for their formidable heads were all turned towards us, and many an impatient stamp of the foot and snort expressed as plainly as words could say that they saw no reason why they should give place to any one intruding upon their haunts.

The Kaffirs evidently considered danger imminent, for all, without exception, sought safety in the scattered mimosa trees. Poor fellows, they were scarcely to be blamed for this, for they were all on foot and we were mounted. What a common thing it is for us, more especially when youngsters, in narrating our adventures in the field sports of foreign lands, to tell how the confounded niggers bolted, or grew pale with

fright, &c. &c. &c. On such occasions we do not remember that the poor niggers in question are seldom armed with more than a stick, and that from their being nurtured, and having spent their lives, among the wild beasts, they are far more aware of when danger is to be apprehended and consequently safety necessary to be obtained, for they are not possessed of weapons that would place them on an equality, or probably give them a superiority, to the foe. But to return to the buffaloes. They were so closely packed when we arrived within fifty yards of them that it was impossible to select a vulnerable part of any of the herd at which to fire. First a detour was made to the left, then to the right, but these ruses were of no avail, the same formidable *chevaux de frise* was opposed to us. This unexpected, and I may say almost unprecedented, mode of opposition was soon accounted for, for in the crowd wheeling, or changing front it may be called, numerous very young calves were seen among them.

At length a bull, the patriarch of the herd, as if to give battle, withdrew from the others and advanced several paces towards us. My comrades remained firm while I took ground about twenty paces to my right, with the hope of obtaining a shoulder shot. Poor beast, it could not face every way, so I succeeded. Ruby, my pet mare, stood as steady as a rock when the reins were dropped

upon her withers, and I had the fortune to place the bullet exactly where desired. The result was a rush forward of a few steps, a stagger, and the noble beast fell head foremost. But this was not all that succeeded the report of my gun, for in an instant the companions of the stricken hero turned on their heels and rushed across the savannah for the mass of reeds in the distance. Such was exactly what was wanted. Each singled out a victim, and we raced for who should have the honour of being first alongside his prey. Being the best mounted I had the fortune of being first, but this nearly cost me my life. A cow, with doubtless a sickly calf, were laying in the grass a little to the outside of the course the others of her race had taken. Never for a moment dreaming of such a *contretemps*, I almost rode over her.

As the mother sprang to her feet Ruby shied, almost fell, and with the greatest difficulty I saved myself from a spill, and that at the cost of dropping my gun, which I could not for some time recover, as the cow repeatedly and persistently charged me, and with such headlong velocity that I was obliged to keep at a respectable distance. However, before I retired, I took the precaution of dropping my handkerchief to indicate the vicinity of where my weapon lay, for nothing is more difficult to find in long and close

grass than a gun, except possibly it be the proverbial needle in a haystack.

As I was now *hors de combat* I was intent on returning to where our followers had been left, but this I found unnecessary, for no sooner had I left the way clear for the affectionate parent and her offspring to regain the shelter of the dense labyrinth of reeds, than like a discreet general she beat a retreat, ever keeping a watchful eye on the rear.

I soon found my gun, and hurried forward to where several shots had been fired. Here I found Rose engaged with a bull that appeared to bear a charmed life. Not a shot could be made at less than fifty yards, for the moment that distance was decreased a vicious charge would ensue that sent one or other scampering. Having divided, each endeavoured to gain a position on the flank, but the enemy was wide awake, and retired too rapidly for this to be accomplished, at the same time repeating the charge if our attentions became too pressing. When about one hundred paces intervened between the bull and the lurking-place of reeds Rose again fired and brought the savage brute to his knees. While my friend was loading I seized the chance to ride up close and deliver a death wound, and I was just in the act of dismounting to do so when the buffalo sprang to his legs. Ruby drew back from nervousness

or fear, but the enemy lost the chance of playing the very mischief with me. Possibly it was so confused that it did not observe how totally I was at its mercy, or that regaining shelter was so paramount a feeling that everything else gave way before it in importance. As the bull retreated I fired two hurried shots, only one of which told, and, ere fresh cartridges could be shoved into the breeches, the tall reeds had closed behind the brave and sorely wounded animal.

At this juncture Reims, a Boer, the third of our party, came up; he had been successful, and, as there was in consequence more than a sufficient supply of meat, proposed that we should retire to a suitable camping-ground to pass the next few hours; but this Rose would not hear of.

"I will have that bull; he's got eight shots in him, and I'll bet my life he's dead at this moment."

"You'll get into another scrape as you did a week ago. You are the most obstinate foolish Englander I ever see. I wouldn't go into those reeds for the best *saulted* horse in the Transvaal. I have killed more *buffle* than ever you see, so know a deal more about them. What's the use of running the risk? Come along, lad, take the advice of one old enough to be your father."

"Shut up; stop your preaching. Dutchman, I tell you the brute is dead, so what's the use of all this talk."

So Rose, disregarding the friendly advice of one who was unquestionably one of the best and most experienced hunters in this part of the world, followed the spoor of the enraged beast into cover so dense that an elephant could not have been seen five yards through it.

"*Mein Gott*," exclaimed my Boer friend, "he's mad or he's fool. What make me hunt with such a man? I give my horse to see him back again."

We were not long kept in suspense. A shot was fired, for a few moments all was still, when frightened, covered with soil, and gored, the horse of Rose burst into the open.

That our friend was killed, or in imminent danger, there could be no doubt. The Boer sprung from his saddle in a moment, called upon me to follow him, and both together we entered the reeds on hand and knees, keeping well to leeward of the trail. For some seconds all was still as the grave. Slowly, but tediously, we continued to advance, then stopped to listen and again renew our slow but silent progress.

At length a low moan greeted our ears, it was close at hand; so carefully parting the tall reeds we gazed earnestly in the direction from whence the sound had come. All was still for awhile, when another moan, half grunt, was heard. Closer and more cautiously we crept towards

what caused it, Reims leading the way, and I close behind. At length my companion raised his heavy gun. His aim was long and careful ere he pressed the trigger, but the report was answered by a continuation of fearful struggles which caused the brittle reed tops to fly in all directions.

The Boer in a moment was on his feet, and rushed forward. Another shot instantly was made, and before I could reach his side the buffalo had ceased to exist.

But where was Rose? Close by, dead, his poor body bruised and trampled into such a mass that, but for the remnants of his clothing, no one could have recognized this to be the remains of the gallant, bright, and ever happy companion of a few minutes before.

Little did the poor fellow think when he said that "he would bet his life he's dead at this moment," he was so soon and so seriously to be taken at his word.

The kindly-hearted stalwart Dutchman carried out the body upon his shoulders, and when the open was gained he selected a soft piece of sward on which to deposit it, after having done which, with a delicacy that spoke of a loving heart, he wept as a child; while the natives, unused to express grief after such a manner, looked on, the personification of solemn silent sadness, for he was a favourite of all, and his deeds of prowess had

won from these swarthy children of Bechuana Land an admiration that almost amounted to worship.

The funeral we will pass with only this remark, that, although destitute of all the paraphernalia that accompany such occasions in civilization, it was none the less impressive, for the attendants were actuated by the purest and most unselfish feeling known to our race—viz., true affection.

Although the lion unquestionably frequently preys upon the buffalo, I doubt very much if they ever attack a mature animal unless it be sick, or wounded, or several of the big cats are banded together to carry out this undertaking. On the other hand, there is not the smallest doubt that numbers of these *Felidæ* are annually killed by either cows in defence of their calves, or by old bulls who have chanced on the marauders asleep after they have become incapable of activity from having indulged in an excess of food during the previous night. At Balinwatto, a domestic bull was known to have killed a large male lion that had the audacity to spring into the cattle kraal with the hope of securing a fat young heifer. But he, as well as others before to-day, had calculated without his host.

Again, when considerably to the north of where the incident last narrated occurred, I had

a very close shave of falling into a buffalo's power. It was in this way :—

I had been hunting from break of day, and although I had seen lots of vildebeest, hartebeest, and other antelopes, they were so wild that it was impossible to come within fair shooting range. Moreover, I had the misfortune to be mounted on a very slow horse, which had only sufficient speed to be useful in the chase of elephants. It was, nevertheless, a very steady old garron, and staunch as a rock, making it invaluable in pursuit of the latter game.

After I had laid up for a few hours during the heat of the day, a Bushman came to me with the information that there was a large herd of buffalo close at hand.

As meat was much wanted, I hastened the saddling and hurriedly departed for the scene of action, with the Bushman as guide, leaving word for the rest of my followers to come after me as soon as possible.

The country was beautiful in this locality. A large flat covered with grass, in parts extremely rank, and dotted over here and there with scattered mimosa, meruley, and baobab trees, while at intervals of half a mile or more kopjies—an immense jumble of rocks—would crop up to the height of several hundred feet. These excrescences deserve a word of notice, for they

is a peculiar feature of tropical South Africa. In many places they are composed of a brilliant red sandstone or of a rusty brown marble-looking formation, and from their detached and broken positions, whence the boulders are visible when some powerful volcanic force had shoved them up to their present elevated position. Strange as it may appear they are ever covered with a considerable amount of vegetation, particularly wild fig, some varieties of palms, and numerous descriptions of creepers, although it is nearly impossible that there can be any soil or moisture about their roots.

To see the setting or rising sun glinting off these masses of rock is a sight never to be forgotten, for every corner or cranny seems to be possessed of jewels of unapproachable brilliancy that reflect every shade of light possessed by the rainbow.

The buffaloes were soon found, and with a due amount of caution I succeeded in approaching within thirty paces of a very fine young, but full-grown, bull. The better to make sure of my aim I dismounted, and gave the game both barrels from my eight-bore. The thud, thud, in response told me that they had hit, while a stagger forward and attempt to lay down said that they had been well placed. My horse, which was behind an ant hill, on which grew numerous bushes, I

now left and walked up to the quarry, which I did not for a moment doubt would never regain its legs. But in this I was mistaken, for no sooner did the wounded beast see me than it recovered its legs, and, without hesitation, dashed at me. Both barrels I again delivered at less than fifteen paces. Still the foe came on; so ultimately I was compelled to have recourse to the undignified course of turning on my heels and beating a most precipitous retreat. I feel convinced that my pursuer had his speed impeded by the wounds he had received, for I gained the ant hill and clambered up it, but not before his horns were in unpleasant proximity to my person. But here I was safe, for although the buffalo again and again attempted to climb its steep sides he utterly failed. At length the horse caught his eye, and on him he now sought to vent his wrath, but the old steed simply cantered or trotted, as emergency demanded, round my asylum.

I think it could scarcely have been possible to have witnessed a more ludicrous scene, for my mount would not be driven off, nor would the bull give up the chase. I had now time to load, and, waiting for a clear broadside shot, I tumbled Mr. Buff over in his tracks. Immediately the shot was fired the old horse actually turned round to see the result, then walked up to the

prostrate foe and examined him, as if with the eye of a connoisseur on shooting matters.

I have killed a great many buffalo with one bullet, seldom have I required more than two. But, from some inexplicable cause, you will occasionally come across an animal that it appears impossible to deprive of life, although your shooting looks, when inspecting the carcass, to have been perfectly correct.

Another incident I will mention which illustrates the ferocity of the African buffalo, and shows how dangerous it is to continue its pursuit into cover after it has been wounded. A Swede, who was generally designated by the traders of Bechuana and Matabele Land "the Count," and by the natives "Uncle," I was well acquainted with, and the reader will find him referred to several times in the pages of my work entitled "The Great Thirst Land."

Yes, I have reason to remember him well, for he sold me lung-sick bullocks for sound animals. But such conduct in the Transvaal is not considered in the least reprehensible, but *au contraire*.

This doubtless arises from all the residents of our new possession being associated daily with cattle; thus on all subjects connected with them each considers that he is sharper than his neighbour. So, if one can sell a worthless or diseased

animal, the vendor does not hesitate to boast of the exploit.

As I was victim, I did not take kindly to this local habit, so vowed vengeance against the pocketeer of my sovereigns.

But, alas! "the Count" is dead, and I forgive him; even if alive I doubt not that I would likewise, for I am now more acquainted with South African institutions and ways than I was five years ago.

"The Count" was a great dandy, a good shot, and a most successful hunter. He and a friend were hunting on one of the tributaries of the Zambezi, and having in the morning of the fatal day killed a sufficiency to feed their people, both dismounted to examine a gigantic baobab tree (*Adansonia gigantea*). While thus employed a honey-bird or indicator paid them a visit and by its extreme tameness and solicitous conduct induced our friends to follow it.

In adopting such a course as this they were opposed by their attendants, for all the natives confidently believe that this little familiar bird is possessed of the spirit of the Evil One, or is an emissary from him, to lead people into danger, if not actually to death.

This belief can be easily accounted for in this way. On occasions when the indicator has been followed a lion or a snake has been met, and of

course then the poor little guide to the bees' treasures was adjudged as being in conspiracy with the Evil One to destroy them.

However, the Count and his friend did not believe in such stuff and nonsense, thus they followed the honey-bird for a mile or more, when they came across a herd of buffalo, at which both fired, the result being that a bull was killed and a cow wounded, which, after the custom of this race, made at once into cover.

Contrary to advice, our friend would follow up the game, but scarcely had he entered the brush when he was charged, and both horse and rider dashed to the ground. Neither steed nor its master lived above a few minutes after the savage and enraged animal had struck them.

The Count's friend told me the above particulars several times, when he invariably added, "You should not have been so hard on him in 'The Great Thirsty Land' for selling you those lung-sick bullocks."

Out of the very sparse number of hunters that enter into far Kaffir Land beyond the Limpopo, I have known four lose their lives from buffaloes in three years; at the same time I cannot help adding that each of these unfortunates might have been alive at this moment if they had not persisted in following wounded animals into brush or dense reeds.

From my own personal experience I know for a fact that, when one of this species is severely hit and thinks that it is being pursued, it will double back and keep guard over its own spoor, with the hope of getting the tracker within reach. In this ruse too often does it succeed, as is proved by the number of casualties that annually happen to those who are partial to the pursuit of this dangerous game.

For African buffalo always use the largest bore guns you can carry, and load with the heaviest charge of powder your shoulder will bear. Shells are useless on this noble animal as they explode *before entering the carcass.*

From Africa we must transport ourselves in thought to the forest and hill ranges of eastern India, where my experiences have been so limited that I prefer quoting from Colonel Pollock, so well known as one of the most successful and experienced sportsmen of that portion of our Indian possessions.

“ Heavy rain all night and the greater part of the day. We started at half-past 6 A.M., and agreed to fire at nothing less than buffaloes, bison, and the like. Of course we put up very many sambur, but we let them go. About 8 A.M. I came across five bison lying down, and, as I was within fifty yards of them, I could have taken my choice, but did not like to do so, as I was the

only one of the party who had killed bison ; and as the other two were griffins, I wished them to get a shot too. So I stood perfectly still, beckoning them to come on, whilst hurrying on their elephants ; and whilst my back was turned towards the bison, a wretched *háthee* trumpeted, frightened the bison, and I never got a shot, though I suppose I was a good five minutes standing over them. So much for forbearance out shooting. We followed the herd for two hours, and at last drove them out of a very heavy piece of elephant grass, in which they had taken refuge. One immense bull gave me a broadside shot as he ran past, and I put two balls into him out of my two-groove No. 10 Lang. He ran for about 200 yards and then stood still. Madden was on the fastest elephant and got within twenty yards, but he was so excited that he missed clean with both barrels. He told me the bison was bleeding through the mouth and that he appeared very seedy. A young bull bison, about sixteen hands high, joined the wounded one, and by trotting in front of it appeared to give it new life and to urge it onwards. My elephant was very slow, but I urged it on to the utmost. The wounded bull would now and then stand and look round, and I was in hopes he would charge or drop ; but no, the confounded young bull kept urging it on, and the two would trot together for a couple of

hundred yards and then stop to breathe and so on, keeping about 300 yards ahead of us. At last they disappeared in a very heavy piece of elephant grass; beyond was all open, and we were convinced the big bull had laid down in the grass and that the young one had remained with him, so we beat back; suddenly, not five yards ahead of me, up jumped the young bull and galloped away straight from me, tail on end. I took a dead shot just below the root of the tail. My first shot went over him. My second caught him just at the hip-joint, and went through into the chest. He fell like a snipe and never moved again. The big bull I am convinced lay dead, as I found his remains in this very jungle exactly one year afterwards; but just as we had padded the best parts of the young bull, together with his head, and were going back to search for the big one, a herd of buffaloes appeared in the distance, and as up to that time we had not bagged a single one—indeed I never had a shot at one—in our excitement we forgot the wounded bison and chased the buffaloes, which, however, soon outran us. As we were a long way from camp we turned homewards, and suddenly came upon a huge solitary bull buffalo. He saw me distinctly, but took not the slightest notice of me. I beckoned the others to come on, and when within fifty yards we all let fly. He was rather hard hit but

did not charge; we all followed in chase. As it was raining at the time, I jumped off to load under a tree, whilst Madden and Boyle went on; before I had finished loading I heard several shots, the trumpeting of elephants, and the two yelling for me to come on. So I hurried after them, and found that the buffalo had suddenly charged, knocked the legs from under Madden's elephant, very nearly upsetting him, and then had chased Boyle's elephant, who, however, proved too quick for him. Neither elephant would budge an inch after him; the buffalo was quietly walking on, and I followed, and when within about fifty yards gave him several shots, but he took not the slightest notice. Presently he entered a piece of very high grass and took his stand there, listening intently for us, to pounce down upon us suddenly. I was on a pad, as I found that I could shoot far better off it than out of a howdah, but I could not see into the heavy grass without standing up, a process which is anything but safe on a pad, as you have nothing to hold on by. However, knowing my elephant, a female one, to be very quiet, I did stand up, and saw the buffalo in front of me, about thirty paces off, his ears turned back, and evidently intending mischief. I took the heavy Lang and fired for the spine; in one moment he was down upon me. I had only time

to throw myself down in a sitting posture on the pad before my elephant was driven forward a good two yards by the shock of the charge ; once the buffalo, which stood within two feet as high as my elephant, came alongside and looked up at me with his great stupid face not a yard from me. I put the rifle down, using it with one hand like a pistol, touched his forehead, and pulled the trigger, but for once in my life the old Lang failed me, as it missed fire. The next moment I was urging the mahout to push the elephant forward, as the big brute of a buffalo was driving his great horns into a delicate part of her body and mauling her dreadfully ; but the stupid brute would not move except when driven forward by the buffalo. It did nothing but screech with its trunk in the air ; at last I got it away, and Boyle and Madden, both firing together, stopped further charging, and I reloaded and examined the elephant. She was cruelly mauled ; she had to be laid up for four months, and though up to this time she was one of the steadiest beasts I ever saw, ever afterwards she was useless for *shikar*. I got on to another elephant and went again in chase ; we soon came up with the buffalo, who now showed decided signs of ill-health ; a few more bullets, fired at close quarters, laid him low, but it took another dozen shots to kill him outright. He stood

eighteen hands high, and without exception he was one of the finest bull buffaloes I ever met, though I killed lots afterwards in Burmah, and, later, heaps in Assam, but none of them equalled him in thickness of horns; but in length of horns I have shot many very much finer. It took altogether some thirty-nine bullets to kill this beast. The horns were about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet each, outer measurement, but 27 inches thick round the circumference at the base of the horns close to the skull. It was as much as four of us could do to put his head on a pad, and we all rejoiced greatly at his death. We got home without further adventure this day, just at dusk."

From the Asiatic I come to the American, of which I have killed large numbers a few years ago.

Circumstances had caused me to attach myself to a trader, who, with about twenty teamsters, was *en route* for Northern Mexico. My duties were to hunt and supply the party with game, a pleasant enough occupation, but not without danger, for the greater portion of the country we traversed belonged to the much-dreaded Comanche, the most reckless race of freebooters and horsemen probably on the face of the earth, who are at war with everybody, and prize nothing more than a white man's scalp. Knowing such to be the case, it behoved me to keep my weather-

eye open when separated from my newly-formed acquaintances, but for all my watchfulness I several times had narrow escapes. Still time fled pleasantly onwards, and as I write this I look back with delight to the happy, free, thoughtless hours passed either in the saddle, or watching the movements of the wild animals that knew no bounds to their demesne. The Indians seldom troubled my thoughts, for I had a thoroughbred mare that I daily rode, sagacious as a dog, handsome as a picture, and as game, fleet, and enduring as any animal I had ever thrown a leg over. Between her and my bat mule there existed a most extraordinary affection. I had but to go ahead and the latter was certain to follow; so if I did not fall into an ambuscade, I knew full well I could distance any Camanchee braves till I regained camp, where, behind the waggons, backed by the stalwart Missourian teamsters, who well knew the use of their rifles, I would be safe. Unfortunately, the principal of the expedition was a most unpleasant and unpopular person, so that, between his bullying and his unpleasant manner, a mutiny was raised among his retainers, and the consequence was that the majority started *en masse* on their own hook to seek another employer, or find their way back to their native State.

My education and antecedents had been such

of them sitting beside the warm embers, nodding his head like a sleepy listener to a prosy sermon. Every day I expected to be able to re-start. The appearance of the sky denoted change as I turned in on the last evening, but whether it was anticipation of the good things to be obtained when civilization had been reached I know not, or an unaccountable consciousness that danger was not far distant, I could not sleep. First I tried one side and then the other, but without effect. As it was not cold the fire had gradually decayed till only a few embers remained, making the surrounding darkness more intense.

While I was hesitating whether the rebuilding of the fire or a fresh pipe would induce sleep, uneasiness seemed to take possession of my animals. The mule was as watchful as a dog, and as I knew he would not leave his friend, I invariably left him untied. Several times he uttered that short quick snort, so peculiar to the species and always indicative of alarm, while the mare kept moving as far as her *lariat* would permit her.

It might be anything, from a deer to an Indian, so, as my arms were at hand, I quietly crawled out of my lair, taking special caution that no momentary flicker from the fire should disclose my movements, and by a short detour got beside the nags and soon had the soft silky

muzzle of Becky Sharp in the palm of my hand. The greatest disaster a man can suffer in such a situation is the loss either of his ammunition or of his horses.

If there were any hostile redskins in the neighbourhood, by the steps I had taken a stampede of my animals was now impossible.

A few of the longest hours I thus sat, my presence reassuring the beasts, and when day broke so still had all become, that I doubt not I should have been asleep, only that the hour preceding day is well known to be invariably the time selected by Indians to carry out their machinations. In the morning, quietly moving about camp, as if pursuing unsuspectingly my usual avocations, I particularly examined the locality, when, among the remaining scattered patches of snow, the easily-distinguished bruised track of an Indian mocassin was discovered, doubtless made by a brave who had got benighted in search for game, and had thus stumbled across my hiding-place. My camp was, therefore, no longer safe ; the coming night he, with his companions, would be back, when woe betide the solitary white man. My horses I accompanied to their feeding-ground, not permitting them to get beyond control, and as soon as their appetites were sufficiently satisfied I returned to my little home for the last time. The few trifles I pos-

sessed were soon packed and nothing remained further to delay me. Still I waited a quarter of an hour longer for the purpose of building a pile of wood, in which I placed some smouldering embers, in the hope that it would not blaze up for several hours after dark—an indication that I doubted not the redskins would construe into a certain evidence that I was still ignorant of being discovered.

Soon after this episode I entered the Buffalo Range and was afforded unusual opportunities of studying the habits of this most noble game.

The characteristics of their principal haunts are as follows :—

Imagine spread before you an immense plain ; all around, in whatever direction you look, the same expanse of level country stretches before your eye. Such is the far western prairie. The dear old ocean, as viewed from the deck of a vessel, is the nearest simile I can think of. In both an almost level horizon in each direction is met by the sky. Nothing in either is to be seen to break the stillness, save it be the animal life that have these elements for their home. Although this may be applicable, as a general rule, to prairie scenery, there are portions less monotonous ; for, in places, heavy belts of timber mark the margin of streams that ultimately help to feed some of the giant rivers of the American conti-

nent; while as you approach the great vertebra of the country—the Rocky Mountains—hill after hill rises, overtopping each other, again frowned down upon by lofty mountains, beautiful in colouring, soft in their distant outlines, and grand in their irregular and picturesque shape. Moreover, between these hills, almost impassable at first glance, through cañons and gulches you can thread your way, perhaps for many, many miles; when, perchance, a beautiful meadow,* thousands of acres in extent, opens before you, rich and bright in the abundance of its grasses, while the slopes that gird these retired retreats are covered with the densest and loveliest of indigenous trees. Such spots as these are a naturalist's elysium, for game of every variety select them for retreats—the buffalo cow comes to them frequently to calve; the worn-out, fierce-looking bull, over whose head so many years have passed that he no longer has strength to keep pace with the migratory herd and struggle in its dense phalanx for female favour, or choice croppings of pasture, retires to them to spend in abundance the winter of life: while the graceful deer, the timid hare, and the sagacious beaver here pass their lives in peaceful happy contentment, except some adventurous white man, or snake-

* In America termed park.

visioned redskin, should pay it a visit, destroying, as man ever does, the serenity that reigned around previous to his advent.

But come, the morning has broken clear and invigorating, breakfast has already been discussed, and the horses have got a rough rub over. The neighbourhood is well suited for a gallop, for from the slight shower of the previous evening the soil is springy, and fewer of the indefatigable little burrowers, the prairie dogs, have undermined the vicinity. Meat is wanted, and as we start our minds are made up that, unless successful, the sun must dip the western horizon ere we return. Attending our own nags, and giving an extra pull upon the girths ere getting into the saddle, at a sober steady pace we start. An old practised buffalo runner (for so a Western man terms his favourite and experienced horse) will quietly settle to his master's will, for from experience well he knows that probably a hard day's work is before him and all his strength will be required; whilst the youngster or griffin at this work frets and prances, almost pulling his rider from the pigskin. Forbear rider, curb your annoyance, give and take a pull upon your snaffle, soon the novice will settle down, and this day's work will probably teach him a lesson that will act advantageously on his future conduct.

Discussing subjects suitable for such occasions,

miles are passed ; so far, with the exception of numerous bleached bones, or an occasional deer or antelope track, no indication of our quarry has been seen. From a knoll a survey is made, a fresh hole or two is taken up in the girths, and the scarcity of game commented upon. To the Indian, of course, the blame is laid ; war parties or moving villages of redskins are always saddled with being the cause of every disappointment and annoyance in wild life. But look there ! What is that ? A distant cloud of dust. Buffalo for a thousand, and advancing towards where the hunters are stationed. How is the wind ? is inquired. One wets his fingers with his saliva and holds it up. In a few moments the position is declared untenable, and vaulting on their horses all hurry off to get more to leeward, availing themselves of a swell in the prairie to keep *perdu*. Having marked well the direction in which the herd is advancing, keeping as much out of sight as possible, scarcely speaking a word, and then not louder than a whisper, the distance between the hunters and their prey is rapidly diminished. From the nature of the ground no longer can sportsmen remain hid, so, taking their horses well in hand, forward they dash and, in a few strides, what a sight is before them. Cows, bulls, and calves, all intermingled, forming a straggling drove of thousands, heading

in the same direction, and feeding as they progress. Occasionally this harmony of action is disturbed. Two ragged clumsy-looking veteran bulls approach each other—perhaps they have been former rivals for some dusky-hided beauty's favours. With a deep bellow one throws down the gauntlet, which the other is not loth to take up; and, with fire flashing from their partially-hid eyes, each rushes at the other. But the herd have become alarmed; a foe equally dreaded by both bulls is at hand: their *rencontre* will brook delay to be settled at a future date; and with a startled stare and toss of the head, both turn and rush off after the herd, which is already making a most hurried stampede. However, when the hunters are old hands, the bulls might have saved themselves the trouble: while young cow beef is to be obtained none but the veriest novice would think of wasting ammunition on their tough and rugged old carcasses. No time is now to be lost. These animals, unwieldy as they appear, for a mile or so are wonderfully swift, and if they should gain rough ground will beat an indifferent horse. Sitting well down in their saddles, nags in hand, and gun resting across the tree, at a grass country pace, all push for the sleekest and squarest-looking cows they can mark. The pace commences to tell, the distance that separates sportsman from quarry is rapidly

diminishing, a few strides more and one ranges alongside. The gun, which has been just taken in the right hand, has its barrel depressed, low down, and eight or ten inches behind the shoulder is the spot to aim at if shooting forward.

A puff of smoke is seen, followed by a report. The *coup de grâce* has been administered by a master-hand, for the huge animal loses the power of its fore-feet, comes down on its shoulders and head, and nought of life is left but a few spasmodic struggles. But where are the hunters? Look well among the retreating herd and you may occasionally catch a glimpse of their hunting shirts. A few moments more and another shot is fired, this time not so successfully. Again the gun speaks; still the quarry retains her legs, but blood is already pouring from her nose, an indication that surely tells of speedy demise, so stop, let the poor creature die in peace—aggravate not her last moments.

The scene which I have tried to describe took place about ten miles on the south side of the Yellowstone. An old and tried friend from Germany was my companion, and on this occasion we each killed two cows. Double the number, or even more, could have been shot without trouble, but the requisite amount of beef had been obtained, and I was jealous of husbanding the strength of my horse, for then, as now, but little reliance

could be placed on the professed peaceful intention of the Indians.

The range of the buffalo was at one period much more extensive than at present. The same reasons that have decreased, and in some instances almost annihilated other genera, can be safely urged as the cause of this—the cultivation of wild lands and the unprecedented increase of inhabitants on the American continent.

On the eastern limit of the Grand Prairie, in Indiana, I have frequently found bones of the buffalo, telling too plainly that this had once been his home. At the present day, at least 1,200 miles further westward must be traversed before the sportsman can hope for a chance to use his rifle on this game, and year after year farther distances will require to be journeyed to accomplish this purpose. Their southern limits are Northern Texas and New Mexico, while the intermediate expanse, up to 65° of north latitude, according to the season, contains them in more or less abundance. Of late years their range north has been increased between three and four degrees, so that Indians who formerly had to come 200 or more miles, if desirous of obtaining a supply of beef for winter use, have the animals now on their home hunting grounds. I am disposed to believe that this is caused from their finding these northern regions less disturbed—for this is

far north of where the constant tide of emigrants crosses the plains—and that the poor persecuted creatures prefer suffering from the cold of these inhospitable localities to facing the dangers that always are connected with a *rencontre* with the pale-face. Although the buffalo can endure a great amount of cold, and can find food even after a thick covering of snow covers the earth, yet he is not provided, like the musk sheep, for an Arctic winter, and from his greater bulk requires so much food, that a protracted sojourn in the northern barrens must ultimately have the result of reducing his strength, and therefore his fitness to cope with the severity of the climate.

Again, he has other enemies as well as man. The wolves seldom leave him alone. Day and night they bestow upon him the most devoted attention. However, as long as he is in good health he has little to fear from the marauder; but the moment that accident, sickness, or loss of strength from starvation occurs, the buffalo's unhappy position is known, and half a dozen of these robbers will remain by him night and day, watching for an opportunity to complete the wreck; and, should not this occur as soon as desirable, sometimes they will make a simultaneous assault, one pretending to fly at the victim's head, while another attacks in the rear, endeavouring to cut the hamstring, in which they

invariably succeed unless the presence of man should disturb them.

On one occasion, while hunting, I obtained an excellent opportunity of witnessing one of these encounters. At a distance of half-a-mile I perceived an old bull going through a variety of eccentric movements, at the moment perfectly incomprehensible. To know what might be the cause, as well as perhaps to learn something new regarding this species, I left my horse and made a most careful stalk without once exposing myself, retaining the advantage of wind till within a hundred yards of the old gentleman. The ground in the vicinity was much broken, and before attempting to obtain a survey of the situation I ensconced myself behind a boulder. I had been eminently successful the first glance told me. There was the bull pretending to feed, while four prairie wolves were lying around him on the sparsely-covered soil, tongues out and evidently short of breath from some excessive exertion. None of the *dramatis personæ* had seen me, and I chuckled in my shoes as I grasped more firmly my double-barrel, knowing how soon I could turn the tide of battle. By the way, the prairie wolf has always been a favourite of mine, as well as his half-brother, the coyote. Their bark has often recalled pleasant memories, and their ser-

vices have several times recovered a wounded deer. In a few minutes the apparent ringleader of the quartette got up and shook himself. This was the signal for others to get upon their pins. Prairie wolf No. 1 walked quietly towards the bull, occasionally stopping (I believe after the manner of dogs to pluck grass), then, with a sudden spring, made a feint at the persecuted buffalo's head. The buffalo in his turn lowered his horns and rushed a few steps to meet him ; but this was unnecessary. Now the rest of the fraternity rushed up. Another took the post of teaser, while our friend No. 1 dropped in the rear ; and when a second feint at the head was made by his comrade, No. 1, watching his chance, left a deep scar over the bull's hock. Again and again this game was played, the same wolf always retaining his rear position. Is not the instinct of animals most similar to the reason of man? Here each wolf had his allotted work—doubtless that which was best suited for his capacity. The rear assault was the most dangerous ; for a kick well directed would unquestionably have caused instant death to the adventurous assailant ; but the most experienced and expert had selected the post of danger and honour. The flashing eyes and foaming mouth of the bull told most plainly the result ; so I stepped from my concealment. However, all

were so occupied that until I awakened the echoes with a loud "war-whoop," I was unseen ; but man's voice always has its effect in cases of this kind. The vermin, with startled stare, plainly asking what the deuce right I had to interfere, sulkily trotted off as I advanced ; while the persecuted, in return for my kindness, lowered his head and pushed rapidly for me, compelling me to seek safety in flight. Such conduct in the buffalo was scarcely commendable and very unusual. I accounted for it by the harassing his temper had suffered, as well as his feeling how inadequate his strength was for escape by flight.

Poor old creature, his days were numbered ; for as soon as my back was turned, and a safe distance intervened between us, the wolves returned, and as I rode homewards, occasionally turning and halting to watch the gradually more indistinct belligerents, the victim was still employed in battling for life. After all, was he not paying the debt of Nature and dying as his ancestors for generations had died before him ? Man yields his spirit to the source from whence it emanates, on a luxurious couch or humble straw bed, after frequently suffering from protracted and painful illness. The veteran buffalo, effete from age after a long and happy life, when unable to keep with his companions dies in a

gallant and short struggle, overpowered by his too numerous enemies—a death worthy of a hero.

The cow produces her calf in spring, although I have on several occasions met with a mother, as late as the end of July, with a youngster by her side not over a couple of weeks old. The attachment shown by the parent for her offspring, and the solicitude she evinces for its safety, impart a touching lesson, which even the human family would do well to follow. I remember on one occasion I had been setting traps in a small stream that had abundant signs that beaver were numerous in the vicinity. I had waded up this watercourse for upwards of a mile, all the time being hid from view of animals on the prairie by the bluffness of the banks. Having performed my task, I left the stream and ascended to the level of the country. The first glance I took disclosed a beautiful and interesting picture, for a young cow, with her calf almost between her legs, stood determinedly facing several wolves. The baby was evidently sick and the instinct of the party of prowlers told them so, but thus far the attached mother had kept them off. My sympathies, of course, were not with the aggressors, and the better to prove it I picked out the apparent ringleaders, doubling one up with the first barrel and accelerating the retreat

of another with a second; for, although he did not drop, an ominous "thud" gave him a hint that the neighbourhood was dangerous and that he had better leave it while he had the power.

In September the rutting season commences, and furious encounters between the bulls take place; their actions on these occasions remind the spectators very much of domestic cattle. The combatants at first stand apart, eyeing each other with flashing orbs, while they paw up the soil with their feet, throwing it frequently higher than their withers; their short tails lash their sides, while occasionally they bellow in a low guttural voice, dig their horns into the soil, and scatter the vegetation to the winds, as if to work themselves into a greater fury.

At length they rush at each other; the shock sometimes brings one or both to their knees; this is repeated again and again—for over thirty minutes frequently, when well matched, the struggle will be protracted. At length the weaker commences to give way, first slowly, always keeping his head to the foe, till with sudden energy he wheels and leaves the victor triumphant. All this time the cow has stood by, an inert spectator, waiting for the hero of the hour to claim her love.

These battles seldom or never terminate fatally.

They occur at a period when the coat is in the greatest perfection, and the almost impenetrable mane which densely covers the brows and fore-quarters is unquestionably of the greatest service as a protection. It is my belief that when the sexes thus mate the male remains faithful to his spouse, for up to within a month of the cow's confinement both keep together. Early in autumn the bulls are in good condition, but after the rutting season they gradually lose flesh, and by midwinter have become so poor that they are scarcely fit for food. The female, on the other hand, keeps in good condition, and even in spring fat may be found along the vertebræ and lower portion of the carcase an inch thick.

With the advent of the first mild weather, even before the snow has disappeared, they commence to shed their rough coat, first from between the fore legs, after from the prominent parts of the body, and later from the fore limbs and hump. This long hair—or, as it is frequently called, wool—comes off in patches, trees and rocks being used to rub against; the result is, that by March a more ragged, tattered, weather-beaten creature can scarcely be imagined. The horns of both bull and cow are about the same length; those of the former are thick, blunt, and clumsy, while the latter are sharp, slim, and trim-looking. Both sexes much resemble each other; at the same

time the figure of the female is more delicately formed and not within a couple of hands as high at the shoulder, nor is she clothed with such a quantity of the rough coarse covering over the fore quarters.

When a herd of buffalo are alarmed by the approach of the hunter the cows in a few seconds head the retreating herd, closely followed by the yearlings and calves, while the lumbering old bulls, from incapacity, drop in rear. When not disturbed, in lying down or rising they exactly resemble others of the *Bos* family; but if they be come upon unawares by an object of fear, the velocity with which they gain their legs and break into a gallop is truly surprising. They are excellent swimmers, and have no hesitation in entering water; nevertheless, annually, great numbers are drowned, but this generally occurs in spring, when the broken ice is clearing out of the streams. Throughout the western country there are numerous quagmires and frequently unfortunates get imbedded; it appears, in such cases, that without exerting themselves they submit to their fate. I have formed this conclusion from having, unseen, perceived a bull get into such a scrape. I watched him; inch by inch he kept sinking; still I felt convinced that a protracted, energetic struggle would take him across to *terra firma*, yet no such effort did he make.

Thoroughly believing that he was prepared to resign his earthly career, I advanced to have a closer survey of the finale. The unfortunate did not see me till within a few yards ; but when he did, his habitual fear of man predominated over all other feelings. Again and again he plunged forward ; dread of my proximity had given him strength and resolution, for after a few minutes his feet got on soundings, from which the margin was gained, and the brute was once more free. I think this apathy to death in certain forms is common to the majority of the inferior animals.

The dangers attending the chase of this noble game are very much over-rated. True, a horse may put his foot in the burrow of a wolf, cross fox or prairie dog, and send his rider sky-rocketing on his head. The result might be a broken neck, or, if such a fall took place when in the centre of a large herd, trampling to death might be possible ; but I am convinced from long personal experience that, so long as the game can keep going, they will seldom or never turn on pursuing man. At the same time, if you fire at a buffalo as you ride past him, without much changing the direction they are pursuing, he or she may slightly deviate towards the pursuer. However, your bridle-hand should invariably steer your steed from the quarry, not only to avoid this deviation, but to clear the animal if it

drop to shot. The majority of horses accustomed to this work do so of their own accord. At the same time I should particularly caution the tyro that on himself and his own nerve he should invariably rely, not on that of his dumb companion. To be a good horseman, of course, is particularly desirable, and the person who can ride bare-back will often come in for a run when a saddle may not be at hand.

Many of us, of course, can ride in this primitive manner; but there are very few Americans or Europeans who can compare for a moment in this respect with the Indians—they appear so perfectly at home on their horses' backs; anywhere and everywhere they place themselves, and but seldom get a fall. Many a fat cow I have killed without saddle. However, the paces of horses are so very different that some I used for running buffaloes I preferred riding with blanket and a surcingle; others I did not feel sufficiently at home on without the saddle.

For some months I had an under-sized chestnut, very little over fourteen hands. My associates called her a mustang. In some points she much resembled one; but there was a well-bred look about her small head, narrow muzzle, broad forehead and lean neck, that told of aristocratic lineage. Moreover, she was very fast and high couraged, as well as easy in her paces. Her back,

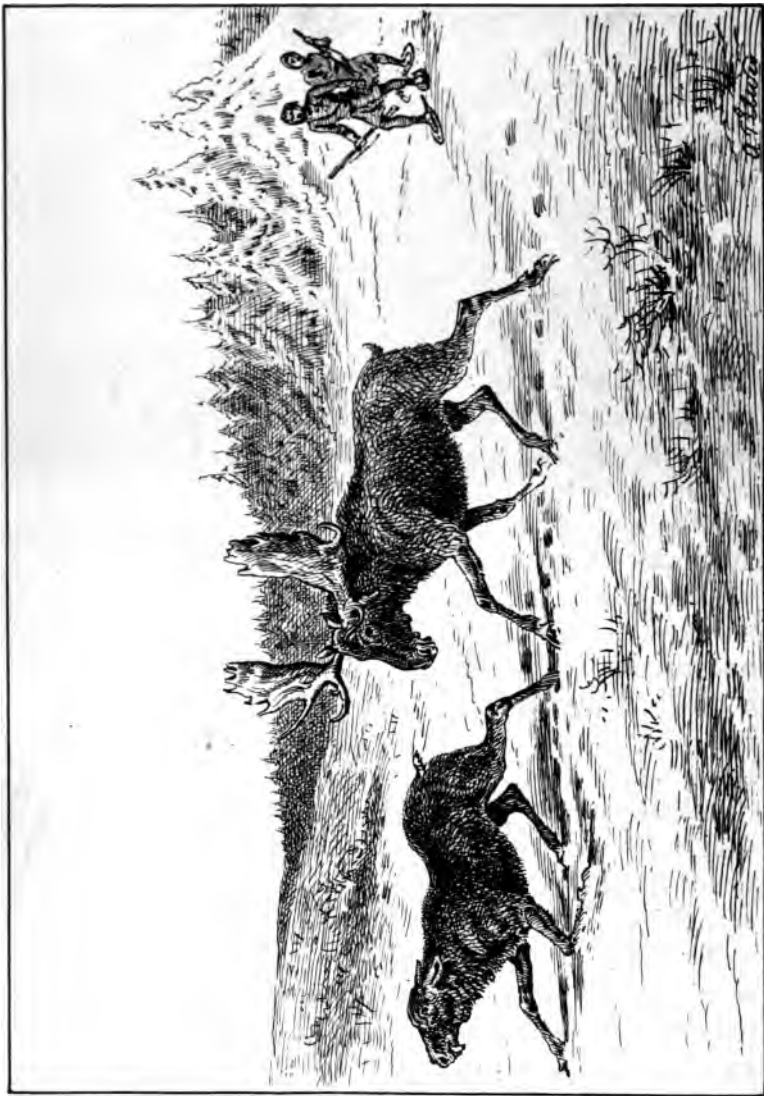
while in my possession, was seldom crossed by a saddle, although she was the favourite mount, and, as such, was more frequently used. I purchased her for a trifle from a fellow with "villain" plainly written on his countenance, and, as might have been expected, she was recognized and claimed. To part with her was a great trial; but I had the satisfaction of learning that my surmises of her parentage were correct, her sire being thoroughbred and her dam a mustang.

When buffaloes are so severely wounded as to feel incapacitated for farther flight they will then sometimes turn to bay. When this takes place, unless the animal be an old bull, you may safely conclude the wound is mortal, and that but an hour or two will elapse before death comes to their relief; but if you be desirous to terminate the final sufferings, when dismounted be very cautious how you approach to deliver the *coup*, for with velocity almost marvellous they will dash at their tormentor, gathering all their energy for the occasion.

A bull I had disabled stood at bay, and, judging from appearances, was within a few moments of dropping; blood flowed profusely from his nose and already he had commenced to straddle his legs to support his towering carcase. Carelessly I approached. The manner of the

rider was infectious on the steed. When twenty yards distant from me down went his head and at me he sprang. The activity of the horse alone saved me, and the shave was so close as to be far from pleasant. It was a cleverly-executed charge and a fitting finale to life. The impetus of his motion he was unable to control. The strength of the body was unequal to his courage of heart, for, ere he could halt, over he rolled to rise no more. In hunting, as in other matters, it is dangerous to trust in appearances—experience has taught us how often they are deceptive.





NEAR THE END.

THE ELK, OR MOOSE.

I NEVER think of the State of Maine without feeling the most intense pleasure, for there, among the pine-clad hills and wood-embossed lakes, I enjoyed many, many weeks and months so free from care, so productive of happiness, that the recollection can never pass away ; but these pleasures are not without alloy. Alas ! that we should grow old, and the companion whose society we dearly cherished should be no more, and that he in whom all my confidence had been centred, and whose society we loved, should in his youth be summoned to occupy a soldier's grave.

A truce to these painful reminiscences. Moose deer and moose-hunting is the subject ; sentiment I will leave to the poet or the love-sick schoolboy.

The State of Maine is characterized by the numerous labyrinths of lakes that are scattered over it in every direction, divided from each other by mountainous ridges clothed to their summits

with giant pine trees and the many varieties of hard woods peculiar to these latitudes, alike giving beauty to the landscape and affording food and shelter for every kind of Northern game. On the hill-sides and extensive flat meadows that edge these lakes or form the margin of many of the numerous noble rivers, in the hollows and ravines, will the moose deer's home be found, his choice of quarters being regulated by the changes of the seasons. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia also are favourite resorts of this giant deer. In these provinces he still remains numerous ; but in northern New Hampshire, Vermont, and north-eastern New York State, where, a quarter of a century since, moose were plentiful, I doubt if at the present date a single specimen can be found. Such is the result of civilization and the influx of the white man.

The size to which the moose deer grows has been variously stated. Audubon says over twenty hands ; Mr. Hays, an animal artist of great talent, and who has spent many years studying his profession in the native haunts of all the subjects he has used his brush upon, informs me that he has known animals to grow much larger. From this gentleman's experience as a hunter and naturalist, I have not the slightest doubt that he is correct. However, I believe about sixteen-and-a-half hands to be the average height of a

full-grown male, but that certain localities—possibly where greater abundance of the most suitable food is to be found—produce much larger animals. All the moose that I have heard of being killed in Labrador—where the winters are particularly severe and vegetation sparse—have been smaller than those shot in the State of Maine ; nor can I see any reason to doubt this being the case. We know how other genera are affected by such local peculiarities, and why should this animal be an exception ?

It is the habit of sportsmen and naturalists to praise the appearance of the moose. My own impression is that there is no animal more ungainly, awkward-looking, and apparently disproportioned. That he is admirably constructed for the part he has to play in life there is no question, but the very disfigurements with which he is endowed give him such an unusual appearance that prejudice alone can call him handsome.

The Virginian deer, the fallow deer, the wapiti, and the red deer, are, to me, perfect in shape, graceful in their movements, and ornamental to the landscape ; but the moose, on the other hand, with his short thick neck, asinine head, protruding eyes, heavy broad ears, tremendous antlers, long awkward powerful legs and disproportionate withers, looking even higher than they are from the mane that surmounts

them, can never be considered by an impartial judge but an awkward and clumsy-looking brute.

Of all the ruminants on the American continent the moose is the tallest. I doubt not that a stall-fed ox can be made to weigh as heavy, but not to attain the stature, and on this account, as well as many others, it is really a duty that the legislature of the various States of which he is an inhabitant owe to the country at large to pass and enforce such laws as will prevent his ultimate annihilation.

Probably it may never again be my good fortune to revisit America ; but can I ever forget the happy days and nights I have spent in the dense swamp, sparsely-covered, barren, tangled woodland, when over the brilliant camp-fire, miles and miles away from civilization, I have been on an expedition to hunt moose? No. Though I have shot in all parts of the world, gone through scenes exciting, both as soldier and hunter, northern Maine, with all its glorious lakes, rivers, and mountains, will stand paramount ; for there my experience of moose hunting was gained ; there I made my maiden effort, which was a failure, to return years afterwards and awake the echoes with the war-whoop that proclaims success.

In December moose deer cast their horns ; by April the successors commence to sprout : by the

end of June full form is developed, but not till many weeks later are they denuded of velvet; when that takes place the antlers are perfectly white, but exposure to the atmosphere soon gives them a tawny shade, which deepens with the lapse of time. The cow, of course, never bears these ornaments, but the young bull-calf at one year throws out a brace of knobs an inch in length; in the second season these are about six inches long; the third year they increase to nine or ten inches, with a fork. In the fourth season palmation is exhibited with several points. From this age there is a gradual increase in the palmation and number of points till the animal attains its greatest vigour, from which period the horns decrease in width and weight, at the same time becoming more elongated.

Twenty-three is the greatest number of points I have seen on one head, and the weight of the horns just exceeded seventy pounds. I doubt if a larger has ever, of late years, been found.

The young moose deer—that is, those under five years—frequently do not show their new head-dress till March. Instances have been known—still I have no doubt that such were great exceptions—of young males bearing the old horns as late as the calving season, which is in the end of April, and, in Labrador and far northern localities, May.

In September the rutting season commences. Then is the period to see this great animal in all the magnificence of his strength. Reckless and furious he rushes about, bellowing forth defiance to his own sex and what is accepted as notes of love by the other. Woe betide the traveller, the unarmed or inexperienced man, who should then meet him, if no place of safety is at hand, for nought but their total destruction would be the result.

I knew an instance where a French Canadian nearly lost his life by one of these furious beasts. He had gone with his pony and sled to bring a boat across a portage, and on his return, while threading the intricacies of the bush-path, a moose, excited with rage and lust, rushed past him. Indiscreetly he fired a charge of small shot after the retreating termagant, which brought him to the right-about and caused him to charge. Into the boat jumped the Canadian, but the thin ribs and planks afforded no protection from such an assailant. The frail craft was soon knocked to pieces and our friend took to a tree, where, from his perch, he witnessed his pony gored and trampled to death.

During the rutting season many bull moose are annually killed, for the hunters, taking advantage of their then combative dispositions, secrete themselves and imitate, by means of a

roll of birch bark, the challenge note of an excited male. Some gallant lord of the wilderness hears the false deceptive call, and, believing that his demesne has been invaded by a rival, towering with rage he rushes in the direction whence the sound proceeds, intent on repelling the invader. Listening to the repeated calls, again and again the bull answers, till at length he is drawn within range of the secreted hunters. My maiden effort at moose-shooting was made in such a manner. As if it were but yesterday, the whole adventure is written plainly on my memory. I had only been in America a few months. The attractions of Saratoga I could not avoid, and when there became acquainted with a family of St. Francis Indians, earning a precarious subsistence by basket-making. Before this I had never met any of the aborigines of the American continent, and hour after hour I passed idling around their encampment, listening to stories of the chase, and more especially of moose-hunting. The dark-skinned race got my spare pocket-money, and I, in return, all their knowledge of woodcraft that could be theoretically imparted. The spirit of adventure had become excited within me, and, ere I left Saratoga, I faithfully promised to visit St. Francis in autumn, to join one of my new acquaintances in a moose hunt.

The beautiful tints of an American autumn

were in their greatest brilliancy when I reached the termination of a long and tedious journey to accept the proffered hospitalities. My reception was not so enthusiastic as I expected; in fact, my ardour was a little damped by the marked coolness of my host. Yet, after coming such a distance, I was determined to do some hunting, and a well-stocked purse enabled me to carry out my wishes. Starting at early morning, on a beautiful clear day, we descended a stream, a tributary of Penobscot River, for eight or ten hours. The easy motion of the birch-bark, the grand scenery and the brilliant coloured foliage, recalled many a vision I had formed of what fairyland must resemble. About four o'clock we disembarked, our birch-bark was shouldered, and a portage of a mile or two traversed, when the margin of a clear calm lake was reached, surrounded with beautiful green hills. Soon again we were on the bosom of the waters, arriving at a second halting-place as the sun in glorious splendour dipped the western horizon.

Hiding the frail canoe in some brush, my attendant leading, we started up an acclivity, when, after an hour's rough and difficult walking, the Indian stopped and sounded a note on his birch-bark horn. To this there was no response, but my friend assured me, "Plenty moose by-by."

The night was as beautiful as the day preceding it. The hunter's moon was at its full, and near objects could be seen almost as distinctly as when the sun was high in the heavens. Several efforts with the call had been made ; disappointment and failure began to appear certain, when a distant and unknown sound struck my ear. At the same moment the redskin seized my arm and whispered, "Old bull." We both placed ourselves in a hemlock tree, and numerous were the injunctions I received of the necessity of silence. Afraid to move, cramped in an awkward position, for near a mortal hour I endured the torments, certainly not of the blessed ; still move I would not, ultimately could not, as the answering voice of the elk in response to the Indian's horn told that the giant was rapidly approaching. At length—oh, how glad I was!—the noblest fellow I had ever set eyes upon broke into the opening at a gentle trot, stopped, and impatiently stamped his foot. The distance that the game was from us could not have been more than thirty yards. Slowly and imperceptibly the Indian's gun was getting into shooting position. I attempted to do the same with mine, when—oh ! what excuse can I offer ?—bang went the right barrel, and, but for a vigorous effort, I should have fallen from my perch.

I had better draw a veil over the recriminations

that ensued, for homicide was nearly the result, whether justifiable or not must be for others to decide ; but Saint Francis was not long honoured with my presence. Of moose-hunting I had seen enough for one season, and for many a year not even my bosom friends knew that I had ever made an attempt on so large a specimen of the brute creation.

In the close warm weather of July and August this game is much pestered with flies. To avoid these plagues the moose almost becomes aquatic in his habits ; for hours he will completely submerge himself, with naught but his head above the surface. At this season, their principal food is the long succulent limbs and leaves of the water-lily. In the tributary streams that help to feed Moosehead Lake it is no uncommon thing for the fisherman or tourist in his aquatic excursions, to come across moose floating, or see them reach the shore in advance of him the wary animal being alarmed, either by the voices or the wind of the intruders reaching his haunts. Such was my fortune once when fishing in a tributary of Lake Parmacheney. Trout had all day been on the feed ; my gun lay carelessly at my feet, half-buried in blankets and other hunter's paraphernalia, in the bottom of my canoe, which I had permitted silently to drift with the current. Suddenly I heard a splash, as if all the fish in the

river had collected to make a simultaneous rise ; but instead of fin it was fur, and a splendid moose, bearing a noble set of antlers, plunged through the weeds and soon disappeared in the recesses of the forest. If I had been prepared, or had my gun even been obtainable at a moment's notice, I could with ease have administered the *coup de grâce*.

When the season advances, and the sparse advent snows occasionally give warning that winter is at hand, the elk leave the morass and river banks for higher ground. Here they collect in families, previous to yarding, which takes place as soon as the lands of these northern wilds have received their annual deep and pure white covering. At this time the moose lives in comparative security, his length of limb and tremendous power enabling him to defy all pursuers. Enjoy well the rest—enjoy it, I say, for it is but for a short season : for when the sun again warms the landscape, and a crust becomes formed on the snow through the thaw by day and frost by night, you will require more than that superhuman power to save you from the persevering Indian or venturous white man. Poor creature ! your chance when once pursued under such circumstances is small indeed. I know no denizen of the forest that, at any period of life, has the odds so fearfully against him.

As may be imagined, the end of February and March are the periods when the greatest havoc among these animals takes place, and I regret to say that frequently the fiendish love of carnage alone seems to occupy the minds of the pursuer. I have known instances—I grieve to say many—when moose have been killed simply for the sake of killing; for, with the exception of one or two titbits, the giant carcass has been left to satiate the appetite of the carnivoræ of the forest. If one who has been guilty of such unjustifiable conduct should read this, let his conscience reproach him for the past and the sting of remorse cause him to resolve never to be again an offender.

The exact position of the scene which I am about to describe lies on the northern limits of the State of Maine.

The days that had heralded the advent of March had been extremely warm, the nights clear, with sharp frost; just such weather as would be pronounced "first-class" for the collecting of sap to make maple sugar. Two days' journey had been required to bring us to the desired locality, for we had both agreed that no search for moose should be made till a favourite neighbourhood, alike beautiful in summer or winter, was reached. Moreover, here we should find a log hut, erected two seasons previously,

and which we had every reason to believe would be in a thorough state of repair. In due course of time we arrived at our rendezvous; the snow was cleared out of the structure, and, considering all things, the two Penobscot Indians who accompanied us succeeded in making our temporary residence look more than inviting. The first night passed in the usual manner; we each pledged the other's health more than once, and again and again the pipes required filling. Still we slept soundly, and day had well broken before either turned out. A hurried cup of coffee and a few morsels of cold meat and biscuit sufficed for breakfast, so that ere the sun had risen over the neighbouring hill we were *en route* for the scene of action. The country that we traversed was covered with hard wood, but not densely crowded—so open, in fact, that a fair shot would severely have punished woodcock which had taken shelter in a similar locality. After tramping three miles, the Indians leading, and I causing much amusement by a succession of catastrophes from one snow shoe overlapping the other, a halt was made, and the expression of the guide spoke plainly of the vicinity of game. Without questioning, we turned off to the left, still following in single file. Stooping low and slowly advancing for some moments, we came upon a yard—but, alas!

deserted ; but such had not been long the case. Our dark-skinned companions were jubilant ; visions of moose meat floated before them, and straight they directed their steps to a place of exit, for the occupants had winded us earlier than expected. To a novice but one track appeared, yet the Indians held up their four fingers to indicate that that had been the number of inmates. Soon we found their information correct ; for, after a pursuit of an hour-and-a-half, we perceived our game—a bull, cow, and two calves—going over a neighbouring swell. The reason of this deceptive appearance of the trail is caused by the female leading, and the bull and calves in succession stepping as nearly as possible in the footsteps of their predecessors.

Just as we supposed ourselves on the verge of success, the pursued passed through a second yard, easily known by the trampled state of the snow and barked sides of the trees. The occupants of this retreat had joined those we were following. This additional force to the pursued added fresh excitement to the chase, and the distress resulting from pace was for the time forgotten. In an hour or more we were again in view, and soon afterwards among the game. My companions I will leave to themselves, and confine myself to my own performance. One of the males had a noble head of horns. These I

determined to be possessed of; so, marking him for mine, I resolved not to halt till successful. Again and again I thought that but a few minutes would elapse till I could shoot; but either from the snow being less deep, or the animal making extra efforts, at least an hour elapsed before the quarry was sufficiently close to deliver with precision a fatal shot.

Soon I was joined by one of the Indians, then by the others. Four moose had been killed; so my companions and self agreed that we had reaped enough reward for one day's work. Next day was equally successful, and more game was seen than on the first essay. I doubt not, if we had been so minded, for days we might have continued this slaughter; but as it was we had as much meat as we could transport to the settlement.

A more rapid manner of taking moose when there is a crust, and one much practised, is to be accompanied by a small active dog, which, if properly trained to his work, will never lay hold, but only snap at the quarry's heels. The poor moose is thus soon brought to bay; his active pursuer, whose weight is so light that he does not break through the crust, dances around the elk scathless, snapping at every momentarily-exposed point, and so engages the victim's attention that the hunter can approach the game

CHAPTER XXII. WINTER WITH WILD BEASTS.

sufficiently close to deliver with certainty an alarming shot.

The flesh of the moose, although sweet, is very coarse. Still many people prefer it to all others. I cannot say that such is the case with me, good as being to my idea infinitely superior. The tongue, most of all, and especially the mouffle or extremity of the upper lip, are great delicacies, more particularly when eaten cooked in the primitive style of the backwoods. It may be the wood fire, or may be the want of seasoning, or more probably still the fresh air and severe exercise of the hunt, but all that I have eaten when snugly housed about the camp fire has been relished with additional gusto. A *bonne bouche* which must not be forgotten, and which only the moose hunter can enjoy, or those who live near the haunts of this animal, is the marrow from shank-bones of the legs, cooked immediately after the animal is killed. This, served on toast, with a sprinkling of cayenne pepper, would make the mouth of the most fastidious epicure water, if he had previous experience of its excellence.

The moose deer changes much in appearance with the rotation of the seasons. In summer the coat is short and fine, in winter coarse and long. Underneath the hair is found an abundant crop of soft wool, which doubtless enables them to endure the great severity of northern winters.

The face-hair, different from that of the horse or cow, grows upwards from the moufle, on the termination of which there is a triangular bare spot. The power of the jaws and teeth of the moose is very great. The facility with which they strip the bark from those trees that constitute their favourite food is wonderful. Their pace is either a walk or amble, the usual bounding gait of other species of the deer family being unknown to them. Even if a fallen tree interrupt their progress, instead of rising at it like a horse they manage to clamber over in a most effective manner.

Not far from Trois Rivières, in Canada, I heard of a moose deer being broken in for saddle purposes. The truth of this I am more than sceptical about. I have also been informed that a brace were broken for harness, and that long and well they performed their part, being possessed of immense powers of draught. This latter report does not to me appear as improbable as the former.

Two methods of capturing moose I have not alluded to—for why? They appear so antagonistic to all those feelings that should actuate the gentleman—viz., by snaring and by immense steel spring traps. The *minutiæ* of the modes of proceeding by which the unsuspecting game is induced to enter either of the above devices,

I am certain would not be interesting to a sportsman.

For many years it was a disputed point whether the moose deer in America, and the elk of Europe, were the same species. Audubon, an authority second to none, refuses to give a decision, and justly so, for he was not conversant with the European animal ; but naturalists of a later date have decided that they are identical.



AN UNWELCOME INTRUDER.

AMERICAN OR VIRGINIAN DEER.

undred miles north of Toronto commences a series of lakes that extend over many hundred square miles northward, scattered in every direction through the dense forest that covers this picturesque locality. Game and fish of every variety are here to be found, and among them one of the best retreats for enthusiastic sportsmen that can be found within a similar distance of the Atlantic sea-board of Northern America. True the prairie chicken, the capricious quail, and the timid trout, are wanting; but the deficiency is well supplied by the number and variety of other species of game well worthy the attention of both hunter and fisherman. Deer and deer are here numerous, roaming untrammelled in the retreats of their progenitors; the clear sparkling waters are well stocked with the voracious *muscanonge* and active impetuous black bass. But he who is desirous of enjoying this elysium in pursuit of game must be a rather-bed sportsman, no grumbler at

imaginary troubles or shrinker of hard work; for, once he leaves the edge of civilization, no roof-tree will be found to greet the eye after a hard day's tramp, no luxurious downy couch on which to rest his wearied limbs, but, often unprotected, he must submit to the pelting of the pitiless storm. No; he must accept mother earth for his bed, his hunting blanket for his covering, the heavens for his canopy, and, if fortune should favour him with a touch of a north-easter, the leeward of his reversed canoe will give him such shelter as will enable him to keep dry perhaps thirty minutes longer.

Knowing what you have to be prepared for, provided you have the constitution and pluck, make a try, and I am certain on your return you will be in ecstasies with your trip, recalling with pleasure the hardships you have gone through, and laughing at the little misadventures that checkered (like clouds portending a shower on a sunny day) the tenor of your path. We cannot have all play. Few go through the world without an occasional rub. "Variety is the spice of existence;" and without an odd *contretemps* we should become a very unimaginative, namby-pamby lot, unfit for wear and tear, bustle and excitement, that all must endure before their course is run.

From Toronto proceed to the village of Orillia,

at the head of Lake Simcoe. At this pretty little place you will have no difficulty in procuring one of the Chippewa Indians from the village of Rama, on the other side of the lake, to undertake the duties of Palinurus for a moderate remuneration. All of these redskins may safely be trusted, and they will be found not only excellent hunters and trappers, but very obliging, as long as you keep them from the curse of their race, whisky. Of course, as soon as they leave civilization they cannot obtain their dire enemy, unless you should give it, or, what is equally culpable, leave it in their way. How I became acquainted with this region was strange and unlooked-for. Some years since, having business in Toronto, I was detained longer than I expected, and got both out of funds and out of elbows. Returning from the Post-office much disappointed and disgusted at the dilatoriness of my friends, I entered a tavern to have a glass of ale, when I chanced to run against a former acquaintance who had turned hermit, having built a house on the edge of a lovely sheet of water embosomed in the forest several miles farther to the north than any of his neighbours. Soon my troubles were all before him, and he, with characteristic hospitality, offered me accommodation for an indefinite period. Next morning we were both *en route* for his solitary home, and never shall I forget the

feelings of pleasure and admiration that rose in my bosom when first I beheld this charming retreat, situated on a bluff washed by crystal water, and backed by the handsomest varieties of forest trees, making it look to my mind the beautiful ideal of a hunter's home.

After being domesticated some weeks in this vicinity, from the beauty of an afternoon and coolness of the weather I was induced to shoulder my gun and start cross country to Lake St. John, with the hopes of killing some ducks to add to the fare of our already sumptuous table. I had never visited this place before, and as I left the clearing, the last words of H—— were: "Take care you do not get lost." With an amount of confidence, "usually denoting ignorance," I responded that I was too old to be guilty of such a green proceeding. With little trouble I found my destination. Game was abundant and tame, they being overcome with that languor which makes them perfectly indifferent, and which is so frequently the precursor of bad and stormy weather. In a little time my bag was heavy, too much so to be agreeable, and, considering that I had committed havoc enough, I determined to retrace my steps. Another and yet another duck would come in my way, and presented such fascinating shots that I could not resist, so that by the time I had returned to the

place where I first struck the water I was completely loaded. Have any of my readers ever walked two or three miles with from eight to a dozen mallard ducks in the skirt of his shooting-coat? If so, they undoubtedly have vivid recollections of their weight. If still a tyro, I advise you to make a trial, as a new sensation will be experienced, particularly if the ground is soft and muddy. I had scarcely re-entered the sombre forest, when my spaniel found some ruffed grouse, and treed them a short way off to the left. A brace of these delicate birds would be a most acceptable addition to a future dinner; so, without hesitation, I struck off the path to cultivate their more intimate acquaintance. Advancing upon them unwarily, the covey flushed, but flew only a short distance. I thought my chances so remarkably good that I made another try, but again the watchfulness of my feathered friends foiled me. With a malediction on my lips I turned to retrace my steps, but for my life could not tell in which direction my route lay. To be lost! Pooh! pooh! what nonsense! I was not still a school-boy, and had been too long cut loose from my mother's apron-strings. The whole thing appeared too absurd and ridiculous. Off I went, as I thought, straight back to the place I had left; I must cross my own path in a few

minutes — only a few steps farther! I am certainly close now! And thus arguing and consoling, I proceeded. By degrees it began to dawn upon me, though much against my inclination, that I was “certain sure out of my reckoning.” The more convinced I became of the uncertainty of my position, the more I became excited; at first I walked faster, talked to myself, and tried, though I fear very indifferently, to treat the whole affair as an admirable joke. But soon my countenance became elongated and a very gloomy expression usurped the place of my previous smile. For change, I shouted with the hope that some one might hear me — a very improbable thing — except, perchance, some solitary aborigine should be out in attendance of his bear or other traps. At last I became fairly desperate and broke into a headlong run; the race was too fast to keep up, and, fairly blow-wearied and exhausted, I sat down on a trunk of a fallen tree. The depression I felt will never be forgotten. The terrible loneliness, the perfect solitude and monotony, with the certainty of having to pass the night *al fresco*, made my frame of mind anything but enviable. The mosquitoes, which previously I had scarcely noticed, now put in a claim for attention, for my wretched plight seemed to give them confidence and they attacked me front, rear, and flanks in

columns. It was useless to attempt to drive them off; their perseverance would have been most commendable if engaged in a better cause. Night was rapidly approaching, and the giant shadows had become indistinct in their outline, mingling together in one dark gloom. Distant rumbling of thunder portended a coming storm, reminding me that I had better make all snug, for a dirty night was at hand. I soon found a prostrate monarch of the forest, under whose side I expected to find comparative shelter; in a short space I had gathered sufficient inflammable matter to make a fire, determining to sacrifice one of my ducks to the implacable tormentor, hunger. Out of the few matches I had four missed or would not light. But two more remained. With what care and anxiety did I try the others! Alas! the head of No. 5 flew off, and but one remained to save me from Erebus and the incursions of some erratic midnight prowler. With the utmost care I undertook the trying ordeal of squeezing myself into a corner, sheltering my hands with my cap and sacrificing a portion of the last letter from my lady-love for tinder. Success rewarded me, and soon the surroundings were brought out in relief by the brilliant glow, reminding me of the deep contrast of light and shadow in one of the much-admired pictures by Rembrandt. The rain was not long

delayed, and, after a few premonitory drops, came down as if the flood-gates of heaven had been opened, accompanied by the loudest thunder and most dazzling lightning. There is nothing more powerfully impresses man with the omnipotent power of the Creator, or with his own utter insignificance, than being placed alone, unprotected from the warring elements, listening to the dismemberment of limbs from the parent tree-trunks by the fury of the blast or the scathing power of the electric fluid. All my efforts to keep a good fire were futile—sleep was out of the question; while the incessant attacks of the mosquitoes made me restless and irritable. No sick man or storm-tossed mariner ever more ardently longed for break of day. The night appeared endless, and doubts of whether the sun had not been delayed in his course, or taken his departure to gladden with his rays the inhabitants of other planets, intruded themselves. At last, faint lines of light glimmered in the east, foretelling the departure of darkness, and, with greater satisfaction than I ever previously experienced, I rose from my wet and uncomfortable resting-place. To seek my last route was my first endeavour, and for more than an hour I wandered without success. At last, when almost yielding to despair, I struck the margin of the lake I had been shooting on the evening before; and what a beautiful enthralling scene lay before

me. The placid water only rippled where the wild duck sported or the voracious fish pursued to the surface their destined prey; while the shadow of each tree that grew near the margin was so distinctly reflected that the minutest limb or twig could be traced with perfect precision. I stood entranced, and so great was my admiration that nothing could have induced me to destroy the harmony of the picture by destroying the life, or disturbing the retreat, of the beautiful creatures which formed its prominent features. To the left were several deer and fawns, knee-deep, feeding upon the tender succulent leaves of the water-lily, the youngsters occasionally chasing one another in sport and unknowingly practising and developing those muscles which Nature intends to be their protection in the hour of danger; their beautiful graceful mothers frequently raising their eyes from their morning repast with maternal solicitude for their progeny's safety. What sportsman could witness such a scene without feelings of the greatest pleasure? and, in my opinion, unless hunger could be pleaded, he would be unworthy of the name who could desecrate the loveliness and peacefulness of the view by wantonly shedding blood. Long I gazed with feelings of rapture, congratulating myself in having at last discovered a hunter's elysium.

Uncertainty in reference to my position had vanished, as without trouble, by following the margin of the water, I could find my back track, which by pursuing I reached home.

In the last-mentioned neighbourhood I chanced to make the acquaintance of a young Highlander ardently devoted to the chase, and who, when he found that I was also a would-be disciple of the chaste Diana, at once proposed, as the season was suitable and business affairs did not interfere, that we should start for the gigantic and then unbroken woods which covered the township of Oro, situated on the edge of that placid sheet of water, so well known for its lovely woodland scenery, Lake Simcoe. After a great deal of bad travelling, both on foot and horseback, over the most villanous roads that ever unfortunate was condemned to progress on, we arrived late at night opposite Snake Island, then inhabited by a remnant of the once numerous and powerful Chippewa Indians. The distance across to this island retreat was too far for our lungs to inform its denizens that two benighted travellers were desirous of joining them; and, as there was no boat, a camp fire and blanket were required to do duty for roof and feather bed. But, alas! our limbs and bones were demoralized from our former life and absolutely refused to be satisfied, so that both

tossed, fumed, and fretted till the sun thought proper to make his reappearance. Nor was that all: a scoundrelly wolf, whose midnight propensity for serenading had taken hold of his thoughts, kept up a most objectionable chant, however pleasing it might have been to his lady-love, till we wished the brute in Jericho, or any other remote district; not only that, but I will not say that fear had not a little to do with my feelings, for I can distinctly remember, as I listened my blood became exceedingly cold and stagnant, my hands clammy and my throat parched. Moreover, all the stories I had ever read of the sanguinary propensities of these scourges of the distant settlements, from "Little Red Riding-Hood" to "Robinson Crusoe," recurred vividly to my recollection.

However, quiet came with the sun, and after a few ineffectual efforts we succeeded in attracting the attention of a worthy redskin, who, for a trifling remuneration, landed us in his island domicile. Our business was soon made known, and a hunting-party was organized in an inexpressibly short time. The inner man was still to be satisfied, and on making our wants known we were borne off willing captives to the grandest and most capacious log cabins, no less a worthy than a chief assuming the responsibility of providing us with breakfast. I cannot help

here mentioning a little episode which, although it had not the appetizing effect of Worcestersauce, Chutney, a squeeze of lemon, or other familiar auxiliaries, still had its influence on our then pleading stomachs. Sun-fish were destined for the standing dish, and as the good old squaw had a very small frying-pan and a large stock of the above finny treasures to operate upon it behoved her to make several cookings; and, to prevent the results of her first efforts getting cold while the second lot were undergoing culinary operations, the aged matron, with talent that denoted great skill in adapting herself immediately to circumstances, snatched her very battered and greasy straw hat off the head of one of the filthiest youngsters, and made it do duty for a dish-cover. Of course any squeamishness would have been a base return for the anxiety displayed that we should not eat our morning repast cold. An hour afterwards we were all *en route*, three buoyant graceful birch barks transferring the party, which was now augmented to ten and three half-fed hounds, to the opposite beach. Well, all that forenoon till mid-day we tramped, tramped, tramped; the only alteration in the performance being an occasional halt, when an acute observation of some sign would cause comments from all parties excepting our two pale-faces. First, it would be a broke

twig, next an indentation of the ground ; and thirdly, what would not have appeared to the uninitiated a rarity in sheep pastures. Although this was all Greek to us, we determined to look knowing, say nothing, and possibly, like many another under similar circumstances, get credit for being perfect Nimrods. A halt at length was called for, and old Chief John, no small bug, spoke like an oracle. The deer had gone to the big swamp, and if we wanted buck we must go there. Off again we started, I having come to the determination that the whole thing was a farce, and that I would slip off the first available opportunity. The desired chance soon offered, and after half an hour's walking I struck the margin of the lake where the canoes had been left. Another I found before me at this rendezvous, which helped much to console me for not being the only deserter. We had not been long dawdling and attempting to kill time when some pigeons came down to drink ; so, drawing my buck-shot and replacing it with No. 6, I came to the conclusion, as I could not have venison, I would try and procure some of them. Nor was I unsuccessful, for soon half a dozen long tails (the wild pigeons of America have long tails) swelled the voluminous proportions of my pockets. There is an end to all things, and even pigeons got wary of our prox-

imity, and a second period of inaction followed. However, the scenery was pretty, the foliage brilliant, the temperature pleasant, and a hunter might be far less comfortably situated.

Time was passing rapidly, the sun was fast dipping into the horizon, and consequently our indefatigable friends could not much longer be absent. Thus I thought, when Master Redskin jumped suddenly up out of a canoe in which I had been lolling, clapped his ear to the ground and remained in that ludicrous and ungraceful position for some minutes, exciting greatly my curiosity. On asking him for an explanation I naught but a grunt could I get for an answer and a non-describable wave of the hand, as if to invoke silence. After manœuvring thus, my nearly-exhausted patience received the explanation that one of the hounds was running ahead and that they were coming this way. Immediately afterwards I was bundled into a canoe, and although I had never previously handled a paddle, was now forced to take one of those implements and attempt a trial; but no use, the obstinate composition of birch bark would only spin round and make most indisputable signs of objection to its freight; which were manifested by the gunwale several times taking in water and almost upsetting, so that my noisy and irate companion almost got out of his wits with

rage. At length I attained a slight dexterity, and succeeded, assisted by the skilful steering of the Chippewa, in propelling our frail boat under a cedar that grew on the termination of a promontory. Whatever might have been my doubts before as to my friend's assertion that game was afoot, they were now dissipated ; for, true enough, the deep voice of a hound could be distinctly heard resounding through the forest and coming towards us ; every bound the good brute spoke, till the echoes and his voice were blended in one prolonged deep musical note. My pulsation increased as the sound approached, my whole nervous system was in a state of extreme tension, even claspng my gun, setting my teeth, only gave me temporary relief, and never from that day to this has my excitement been so intense. "Look ! look !" said the Indian, and, following the direction of his hand, I saw a splendid doe breasting the water and heading for the middle of the lake. Like all green hands, my first prompting was to start in pursuit ; but my more wily friend put a veto on that proposition, begging me to restrain my impatience till the quarry got well off from land. Long—very long—appeared the next few moments. But it was evident I was not "boss" (American for master)—only a deck hand of very ordinary acquirements. Remonstrance was, therefore, out of the

question, so submission, with the best possible grace, was adopted. By this time the doe had got nearly a quarter of a mile away—for few animals swim so fast as deer—when the signal was given to commence the chase. Never did oarsman more gallantly struggle; every thew, every muscle was brought into play, and what I lacked in skill was made up in *strength*. It however took all the dusky gentleman's skill to keep the craft's head straight. For many minutes we did not appear to have gained an inch; the perspiration ran down my face and even lodged in my eyes; but there was no time for rest, no desire for respite; each succeeding stroke equalled its predecessor in power. At length we commenced gaining—a farther inducement to renewed exertion—and the paddle was dipped deeper and handled still more swiftly. Inch by inch we crept up, at first slowly, then more rapidly, till but twenty yards severed the victim and destroyer. I was about to drop my paddle and seize my gun, when Master Redskin informed me, "Not time yet." On we advanced; ten feet at most intervened. Mr. Chippewa gave the desired permission, and as I pitched my gun to the shoulder he veered the canoe a point or two to the right. A sharp report followed, and the water boiled with the ineffectual efforts of the stricken animal. Quickly the birch-bark was

shot up, and just as the deer was disappearing it was grabbed by the ear and, after several ineffectual efforts, lifted on board. Know you, reader, that a dead deer will sink ; and although I remembered it not at the time of drawing the trigger, my double-barrel was loaded with No. 6, which at that short range, and pointed at the back of the victim's head, almost instantaneously destroyed vitality ; further, however easy it may be to lift a heavy body into a boat, it is a different thing to bring a dead deer into a birch canoe.

On our way to shore we picked up the hound, which was taken on board, and who enjoyed himself by licking the blood that trickled from the shot-holes. Feeling fatigued from my severe exertions, I halted for a few moments and commenced handling our trophy, when the confounded dog flew at me, inflicting a most disagreeable impression of his ivories on the palm of my hand—a habit I believe he had with all excepting his owner ; which peculiarity doubtless was much approved of by him, but was far from raising this canine in my estimation.

That night I was the hero of the day—the lion of the hour—an honour to which I was no more entitled than many whose fame has been made through force of circumstances, and whose

memory will live when an abundant crop of grass, perhaps thistles, are growing over a hero's last resting-place, and the dwellers upon earth have forgotten that such ever existed.

To kill deer if you come across them is easy enough, or to knock them over if they are driven past your stand is what any schoolboy can do, provided he keeps cool; but to stalk deer with success, alone and unaided, requires as much practice, twice the experience, and four times the 'cuteness and observation requisite for any other description of field sport.

I once knew a man who was pretty nearly master of this art, and he could as well discriminate a good day for deer-stalking from an indifferent one as he could a thoroughbred from a mustang. "No use going out to-day, Cap.," he would say, in answer to an inquiry; "the woodpeckers have got their heads up and the deer are lying: best stop at home"—and best it always was. Now, after acknowledging myself not to be an expert, I hope the reader will deal gently with me in regard to this hunt, as I am desirous of relating a little episode that took place when my experience was far from being as great as it is now.

As deer in the Eastern States of America are nearly exterminated, my friends will have, at least in imagination, to believe themselves trans-

ported to the grand and luxuriant West, to no less a locality than the Wabash Valley, in Southern Illinois, where the soil is rich and fat, the timber heavy, and corn sometimes reaches fifteen feet in height; where the atmosphere is redolent of miasma and fever; where the inhabitants shake half the time with chills, and their complexions resemble yellow ochre, with a little of its brilliancy extracted; where, half the year, floods cut you off from the rest of the world, and you are compelled to become a boatman or a Robinson Crusoe, whether you like it or not. However, good fellows with big kind hearts are to be found here, and if anything in this world can compensate, which I doubt, for loss of health, I am inclined to believe that it is the *bon camarade* of a genial spirit. But times are changed since the time I name; the skilful good kind little doctor of the district—a host in himself—has departed for the land of gold; the hunter, my companion—a Dutchman by name but not by nature—retired possibly to his favourite Yazoo bottom, in Arkansas, to reawaken its extensive woods with the echo of his deadly rifle and cheer the many-spotted pack to their prey with his musical stentorian voice. By-the-by, one remains—a German gentleman—whose convivial habits and goodness of heart, with courteous behaviour, will always endear

him to those persons who can appreciate such praiseworthy traits. The better to enter into the spirit of the thing, I will transfer you to the neighbourhood—Vincennes, Indiana; so that you may learn the characteristic features, and if, the first time you are travelling westward by the Ohio and Mississippi line of rail, you look out of the carriage window, after rumbling over the long Wabash bridge, and take a good view of the surroundings, know that this is the locality over which I once hunted.

It was in the month of December or January—I cannot precisely state which—but on rising from my bed, to my surprise, I found the ground covered with a few inches of snow, just sufficient, and none to spare, to track deer with a degree of certainty. Now, I was hungry for venison, and such a chance was not to be let slip. From a habit which is unaccountable among many when they go from home, I had a morning cocktail brewed, and with a glass in each hand sought the dormitory of my Yazoo friend, and over the drinks we both discussed the prospects and our plan of campaign.

The horses were ordered to be in readiness after breakfast, buck-shot and bullets were hunted out, shooting boots greased, and 'baccy and pocket pistols loaded to the neck and stuffed in our saddle bags. A hard day we knew to be

before us, so ample justice was done to our meal ; for, gentlemen sportsmen, rely upon what I say, nothing so materially assists to enable one to withstand fatigue and cold as an ample breakfast.

A ride of about five miles intervened before reaching our ground, but our horses were fresh and we impatient to be at work, consequently the distance was soon traversed, and we dismounted in a grove of saplings, well suited to hitch to and shelter the nags from the wintry blast.

While we are performing the necessary operation of loading, a description of our armament will not be inappropriate. Will, for so I'll call him, had an old uncouth rifle, which, although possessed of no finish, could shoot "plumb centre" with the old-fashioned double trigger, the second to lighten the action of the lock—an invention I had seldom previously seen and never used ; while I myself had a trusty double-barrelled ten-bore, which, from long experience and association, I was aware had only to be held straight to do its work.

A large swamp, about half a mile off, was a favourite resort for deer, and to it we directed our steps ; but before we had gone half the distance we came across numerous tracks so fresh that we kept a sharp look-out in all directions, hoping every moment to be gratified

with the sight of some antlered monarch. Failing in this we changed our tactics, friend Will posting me on the margin of a branch of a swamp, with my back against the butt of a tree, with instructions to remain still and keep a sharp look-out, while he would take a tour around and possibly drive some stragglers across the run which my stand commanded. Slowly the time passed after Will started; the forest appeared perfectly deserted; not a squirrel or bird showed itself to break the monotony, except an angry, squabbling family of woodpeckers, who appeared to have some serious disagreement in reference to the possession of a hole in the trunk of a dead giant tree. Wet feet are never conducive to comfort, and much less so when you are prevented from taking exercise; besides, it was bitterly cold. First I stood on one leg, then on the other, after the manner of geese, which birds I began to consider I much resembled, till at last the inaction became so unendurable that I was very nearly taking up my gun and starting in pursuit of my supposed recreant friend.

As I was about to put my resolution in practice I thought I heard a voice, and, on looking in the direction from whence it proceeded, I was surprised to see a couple of hunters with a cur dog passing my retreat, about a hundred yards off. He who has shot much in the timber

well knows, that if he remains quiet the possibility is great that those moving about may make the game start towards his retreat. And well it was I did so ; for ere five minutes had passed a grand old turkey, head down, and going like a racehorse, shot by ; but turkey was not deer, so I let him go, preferring to be without turkey to braving the wrath of Will for firing at illegitimate game. How often patience and forbearance receive their reward ! and so it was in this instance, for scarcely had the gobbler gone by when a fine large buck came in sight. From his manner he was evidently alarmed, for every now and then he would stop, listen, and continue his route. Unfortunately, he was heading so as to pass too far off to afford a good shot, and the ground was too clear to permit me, with any prospect of success, to better my position ; so I had almost made up my mind not to shoot. However, I changed my resolution, for as soon as he came abreast of me he halted and looked around. The temptation I could no longer withstand ; so, pitching my gun with due elevation, I let drive the first barrel, but with no apparent result, for the deer only threw up his head and trotted off. The second barrel I quickly determined to put in, and, holding well in front and high, had the satisfaction of seeing his lordship make a tremendous bound and drop

his tail, a certain indication that some of the shot had taken effect, but the distance was so great that successful results could scarcely be expected.

After waiting for nearly a quarter of an hour I was joined by my friend, who at once inquired what I had shot at; but when I told him the distance he only laughed one of those peculiar little dry laughs which, as plainly as words said, "You're a fool if you expect to eat any of that carcass." Nevertheless, we together inspected the track, and I had not even the gratification to find blood. Well, Will was for giving it up, but I wanted to follow it out; and after using all his powers of persuasion and argument in favour of his views my friend succumbed, and consented for once to be dictated to. For over a mile we followed our game. The line was straight and the tracks distinct; moreover, the gait was steady, if one could judge from the regularity of the impressions; and there was nought to indicate that we might not with as great propriety follow any animal in these bottom lands that a shot had never been fired at. Will was going ahead, leading, and your humble servant bringing up the rear, when the former suddenly halted and turned round. From the expression of his face I knew something was up, but was scarcely prepared for the information

he gave. "Look here," said Will; "you have hit that deer, Cap., tolerably badly, and I suspect we shall get him yet; his foreleg is disabled, and he can't travel far without our overhauling him." On inquiring how he gained his information, he pointed to the tracks; and sure enough the off fore-foot, instead of making a clean impression, cut the snow for nearly a foot both before and after. "You see," said he chuckling, "he don't use both alike, for it's all he can do to get this one clear of the ground." There was no gainsaying such conclusive evidence, and with renewed ardour we sharpened up the pace of pursuit, alternately changing places, one being constantly on the look-out while the other tracked. Once or twice we got sight of the deer, but too far off, or far too limited a period to shoot; but the view was always cheering. Forward we pressed, exultingly hoping that each minute would finish the hunt; but the deer resolved otherwise, for he was of a most unaccommodating disposition. Soon it became apparent that the confounded brute was travelling the same circle, and that, unless we altered our plans, we might be kept going till dark; but as we were not disposed to work harder than necessary, it was agreed that I should drop behind and screen myself behind the most eligible place, while Will continued the pursuit

with the hope of driving our wily foe past my ambush. Though the plan was well devised, it failed in execution; for after an hour's tedious delay my companion rejoined me, disgusted and dispirited, heaping anathemas upon the foe, pronouncing him to be "one of the very ugliest brutes" he had ever come across. After all our trouble it would never do thus to be defeated; so I proposed doing the tracking while he took a stand, at the same time changing guns at his request.

Full of hope, and animated with the desire of distinguishing myself, I pushed forward with renewed energy. At first the trail was tolerably clear, but, after some time, it led and twisted in every direction through innumerable bog paths. Now I was sorely puzzled to keep correct, but with perseverance and care I managed to carry the track almost to clear ground, where I suddenly lost all signs and was completely brought to a stand-still. I was aware that all dodges were practised, more particularly when deer feel the effects of increasing weakness and incapacity for farther exertion; so, hoping that fortune would favour me, I determined, like a skilful foxhunter, to make a cast completely round the disturbed ground. After the loss of twenty minutes I fortunately again struck the trail, which, to my surprise, led in a reverse direction; clearly indicating that the deer had

retraced his steps probably in the same track, and thus, by this cunning device, almost succeeded in eluding his pursuers. The trail of the animal now became more irregular, and the tell-tale track of the wounded limb greatly assisted me in distinguishing his footsteps from those of his fellows, which on every opportunity he selected; but, all having failed to throw me off so far, the deer adopted a new ruse, which under other circumstances would have been eminently agreeable to the sportsman, but in this instance made me so savage that I would have indulged in the amiable weakness of breaking the gun-stock over the nearest tree, if it had not been that my friend might not see the joke of his rifle being thus treated. So intent was I in watching the tracks that I did not observe the exhausted deer had halted. Becoming alarmed by my near approach, and deeming it advisable to make a fresh effort to place distance between us, he again put forth renewed energy. The brush, unfortunately, was so remarkably dense, that, although I got several glimpses of his tawny hide, still never for sufficient length of time to get a fair chance to shoot, and I was unwillingly compelled to keep tracking. About fifty yards from where I stood, a small river, not over ninety feet across, named the Ambaras, wound its sluggish peaceful way towards its parent stream,

the Wabash, and direct for the nearest part of this river the deer had gone. Still I could not bring myself to believe that a buck at this season, with plenty of ice in the water, would hazard an aquatic performance; but my doubts were soon solved, for on reaching the margin, with surprise I saw the deer upon the ledge of ice attached to the bank struggling violently to keep his footing, the disabled leg, which appeared to hang powerless, evidently now causing serious inconvenience to his progress over the slippery surface. Such an opportunity to finish my work was not to be neglected, so cocking the rifle I pitched it forward and drew a bead, but still no report followed. All my power and exertion could not pull the trigger. Again and again I looked at the lock, and essayed another effort, but with the same result. At length in despair I desisted, and the deer, having altered his mind, came ashore and disappeared through the tangled brake. Of course, to examine the gun and inform myself what was wrong was my first thought. My surprise may be well imagined when, with all my endeavours, I could not get the hammer down; there it would stand, not a particle of compromise was in the confounded thing. All my skill in mechanism was called into play, all my past experience put in use, and not until my patience was nearly exhausted did I discover the

use of the second trigger. Discouraged I was, but whether most at my own stupidity or want of luck I know not. Still hoping for another chance, I followed on in no very amiable frame of mind.

Time fled, and the long shadows of the trees told of rapid approach of night; still not a sight did I further get of the buck; and, to add to my troubles, the tracks a second time led through ground that hogs had lately fed over. Never was I so sorely puzzled. Back and forwards I searched, my eyes nearly strained to bursting, till at length I was compelled to give up the chase. On looking round to find out as nearly as possible my situation, the better and more directly to return to my horse, I espied a splendid wild turkey busy feeding not over thirty yards off, and still unaware of my presence. Sheltering myself behind a fallen log, I took sight along my barrel, determining inwardly to have some reward for my labour; but although this time I worked the trigger correctly nothing but the explosion of the cap took place; in fact, the rifle had missed fire. The turkey, frightened at the noise, lowered his head, ran about twenty yards, then stopped and looked round, still ignorant of the cause of his alarm. Substituting a new cap and again taking sight was but the work of a



few moments, but still the gun refused to explode. I now sprung my ramrod and placed on the nipple another cap, but the result was as before, and the turkey, having become conscious that he was in a dangerous neighbourhood, sought safety in flight. How often a day's shooting is one tissue of bad luck from morning till night! and so it was in this case. First, the game had passed too far from my stand; secondly, changing guns had lost me the deer; and, thirdly, the carelessness of my friend in not sheltering his gun from the damp was the reason of my not having turkey for a future day's dinner.

Tired, hungry, and bad-tempered, I struck off direct for my horse, expecting to have little more than a mile to walk; but with surprise, after having travelled that distance, I found I was turned round and lost. Already it was sunset, half an hour more would make it dark, and the bottom land which I was now wandering through was as intricate, densely-covered a swamp as ever was inhabited by wild cat. The season of the year, moreover, was not exactly the one to be selected for making your couch on the surface of mother earth, and visions of a good dinner, comfortable fire, and dry clothes floated before me. Hark! what is that—a dog barking? And so it was. Forward I pushed to the sound, and

in doing so came across a road, which, on inspection, I recognized as one we had traversed in the morning. The rest of the programme for that day was plain sailing. I found my pony where he was left, my friend's horse being gone; so, concluding Will had made tracks for home, I mounted my fiery little nag, and, with a sufficiently tight rein to guard against accidents, rattled home almost at racing pace. It was nearly two hours afterwards that Will turned up, wet and exhausted—down upon his luck and deer in particular—vowing that he would be up with the sun in the morning, and not return till he could boast of not having been beaten by a broken-legged deer, when there was enough snow to track. My defeat had similarly operated on myself, so that we mutually agreed to devote the morrow, blow or snow, to re-establish our tarnished honour. The morning was well suited to our task, still and clear, with just sufficient frost in the atmosphere to give zest to travelling. The track was easily found, my back track being taken as the guide to where I had my adventure with the turkey.

In ten minutes we again had our game afoot, but without getting a shot, the animal having doubled round before lying down and consequently rising behind us. The bed where he had passed the night was soiled with blood, and



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other indications were such as to justify us in hoping early success. Although perseverance is generally rewarded it was not so on this occasion. Hour after hour slipped by, the game appeared to moderate its pace in accordance with ours, just keeping sufficiently far ahead to be out of range. The badness of the walking (for a thaw had commenced), the continued disappointment, and the difficulty of following through the bush, commenced to operate upon our spirits, and but that we struck a more open range of country, where the travelling was better, doubtless we would have given up. However, as we were in the vicinity of our ponies, we determined to continue the pursuit on horseback, hoping to get a view, in crossing some opening, where we could give the buck a run of a few minutes, with the expectation that a sharper gait might break him down; but luck continued adverse. Time was rapidly gliding by; a few hours more would bring on night, and, as far as we could see, the prospect of a termination was as distant as ever. Want of success or fatigue made us careless, and as we slowly wended our unthankful way—first one in front then the other, unsportsmanlike on such occasions talking aloud, deploring our misfortune, and paying but little attention to the surroundings—my pony (for I was in front) suddenly shied, turning almost

completely round, and at the same time bringing me excessively near getting a spill. And what do you imagine was the cause of this want of propriety in so experienced a steed? Simply this: the deer had lain down and we had almost ridden over him. To wheel round and try to bring my gun to bear was the work of a few seconds; but all my exertions and rapidity of motion were thrown away. The pony would not stand still; he had evidently been frightened, or perhaps was still in ignorance of what caused the alarm.

Moreover, my manœuvring so directly intervened between my friend and the deer that, for fear of peppering me, he dared not fire. To turn round and look at one another, first sulkily, but afterwards to burst into a roar of laughter at the absurdity of the whole thing, was the result, each agreeing that the buck had well earned his own safety, and that two such awkward devils had no right to a feast of venison resulting from that hunt, and, therefore, we had better acknowledge that we were beaten handsomely, and that by a buck on three legs.

In the autumn of 186—, when travelling across the Grand Prairie, I was caught in the first snow-storm of the season. The vicinity was but sparsely settled, and from the thickness of the drift our charioteer lost his way, and, after getting

mixed times without number, and enduring one of the most disagreeable nights out of doors it is possible to imagine, we reached the village of Kent. Under ordinary circumstances it would have presented no great inducements, but the large wood fire that blazed in the bar-room of the diminutive tavern, after our protracted night of hardship possessed such attractions, that I determined to lay over for a couple of days. The neighbourhood was well stocked with game I learned the following evening, when I presented myself among the *habitués* who commonly made this public-house their place of rendezvous after the toils of the day. No small portion of the conversation was in reference to a buck, who for years had constantly been seen, yet none of the heretofore successful hunters had been able to circumvent him. It was evident that this animal was of no ordinary size, as he was dubbed by all with the *sobriquet* of the big buck, and one regular old Leather-stocking, whose opinion was always listened to with the reverence due to an authority, ventured to assert that he believed the bullet would never be moulded that would tumble him (the buck) in his tracks. This extraordinary deer had almost escaped my memory, and I was resting over my next morning's pipe and beginning to fear that my visit was longer than necessary, for there was absolutely nothing to do but

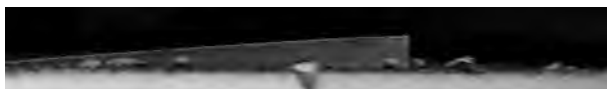
to eat and to sleep, unless the prices of pork, corn, or wheat had possessed an interest, when a man from the timber land arrived with a load of wood, and held the following conversation with the mixer of mint juleps, cock-tails, &c. "Abe, have you e'er a shooting-iron that you can loan this coon?" Abe having replied in the negative, and inquired the reason, was told that the most allfiredest big buck had crossed the road, about a mile off, and gone into the squire's corn.* Quietly going to my bed-room I unpacked my heaviest gun, a ten-bore, in whom I have particular faith, and, having noted the route that the teamster had come by, I followed the back track of his sled, and true enough found the prints of a very heavy buck. The day was still young, myself in good walking trim, and with an internal determination not to be beaten except night overtook me, and very probably with the hope to show the neighbours that a Britisher was good for some purposes, I followed the track with unusually willing step and light heart. To get into the corn-field the buck had jumped the snake-fence and afterwards doubled back, and as the wind did not suit for me to enter at the same place I made a considerable détour. In my right barrel I had sixteen

* Every person in Western America is either squire or colonel.

buck-shot, about the size that would run one hundred to the pound, and a bullet in the left. As the corn had not yet been gathered, and the undergrowth of cuckle bars and other weeds was tolerably dense, I had little doubt but that I would get sufficiently close to make use of the former. An old stager like my quarry, I knew, from experience, would be desperately sharp, so with the utmost caution I advanced up wind, eyes and ears strained to the utmost tension. I had only got about a fourth of the field traversed, when I heard some voices right to windward encouraging a dog to hold a pig. The noise of the men, dog, and porker, I concluded, would start the game off in the reverse direction; so, hurriedly retracing my steps, I regained the fence, got over it, and took my stand at an angle that stretched close to a slough which was densely covered with a growth of various aquatic weeds and rushes. In about five minutes after gaining my position I was greeted by a sight of the beauty, who hopped the fence where there was a broken rail, and, gaining the opening, for a moment halted, then, tossing up his head, offered me a fair cross shot nearly eighty yards distant. Pitching my gun well in front I pulled the trigger, and well I knew not fruitlessly, for he gave a short protracted jump, dropped his white tail close into

his hams, and with an increased pace disappeared in the swamp.

Unless the wound was mortal, or so severe as to seriously incommode him, I was certain he would not be satisfied to remain in such close propinquity to danger; so, after reloading, I made a *détour* to find where he had left this cover to seek one more retired. My conjecture was correct, for after travelling nearly half-a-mile I found the familiar tell-tale track. The snow was in pretty good order, both for tracking and walking, and I did not let the grass grow under my feet. As yet I had seen no signs of blood, which the more thoroughly impressed me that my lead had made more than a skin wound. In about an hour's walking I found myself on the edge of another slough, which I was hesitating whether to enter or go round, when I espied my friend, some way beyond range, going over a neighbouring swell of the prairie. Of course I cut off the angle, and cast forward to where the view was obtained, and, as I rose the swell, in the distance I saw my friend at a standstill, evidently anxiously scrutinizing my direction. My cap was of a very light colour, so I concluded he did not see me, and my supposition was again correct, for after a few minutes he had relaxed his race, and, turning at right angles, walked into a small expanse of dense rushes,



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interspersed with an occasional stunted willow. In deer-shooting, if you suppose an animal severely wounded, never hurry him; if he once lies down, and you give him time to stiffen, you will not have half the trouble in his ultimate capture that you would have by constantly keeping him on the move. So I practised in this instance: carefully for ten or fifteen minutes I watched that he did not leave the cover; then, having concluded that he had lain down, I quietly lit my pipe and dawdled away an hour more. Deeming that I had granted sufficient law, I renewed operations and pushed forward; the track was very irregular in length of pace from where he had reduced his gait to a walk, and several times from want of lifting his feet high enough he had scuffed the surface of the snow with his toes. An old deer-stalker will know these symptoms: a young one may, without harm, remember them. Having cautiously followed the trail three parts of the way across the cover, and almost commencing to think I would have done better by waiting half an hour longer, the buck jumped up within twenty yards, heading straight from me, when I gave him the contents a second time of the right-hand barrel in the back of his head.

The distance was too great to remove him home that day; so, cutting a branch off a

willow, I affixed my handkerchief to it, and left this banner waving to denote possession, also to furnish a hint to the prairie wolves that they had better steer clear. That night at the tavern bar, in the most ostentatious manner, in presence of the assembled crowd, I ordered a team to be got ready in the morning to bring in the big buck: old Leather-stocking, *sotto voce*, remarking that I had not been reared on the right soil to be able to come to that game. However, next morning, when I arrived with my trophy, the crowd congratulated me, while Leather-stocking remarked that he knew not what the world was coming to, by G——, when a Britisher with a bird gun, could kill the biggest buck in Illinois. In conclusion, I would say that in skinning we found that at the first shot one grain had gone through the lungs, while two more had lodged further back. The gross weight of this deer was one hundred and eighty-four pounds.

THE END.



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